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A
HISTORY
OF THE
REFORMATION
ON
THE CONTINENT.



By GEORGE WADDINGTON, D.D.,
DEAN OF DURHAM,
AND AUTHOR OF A HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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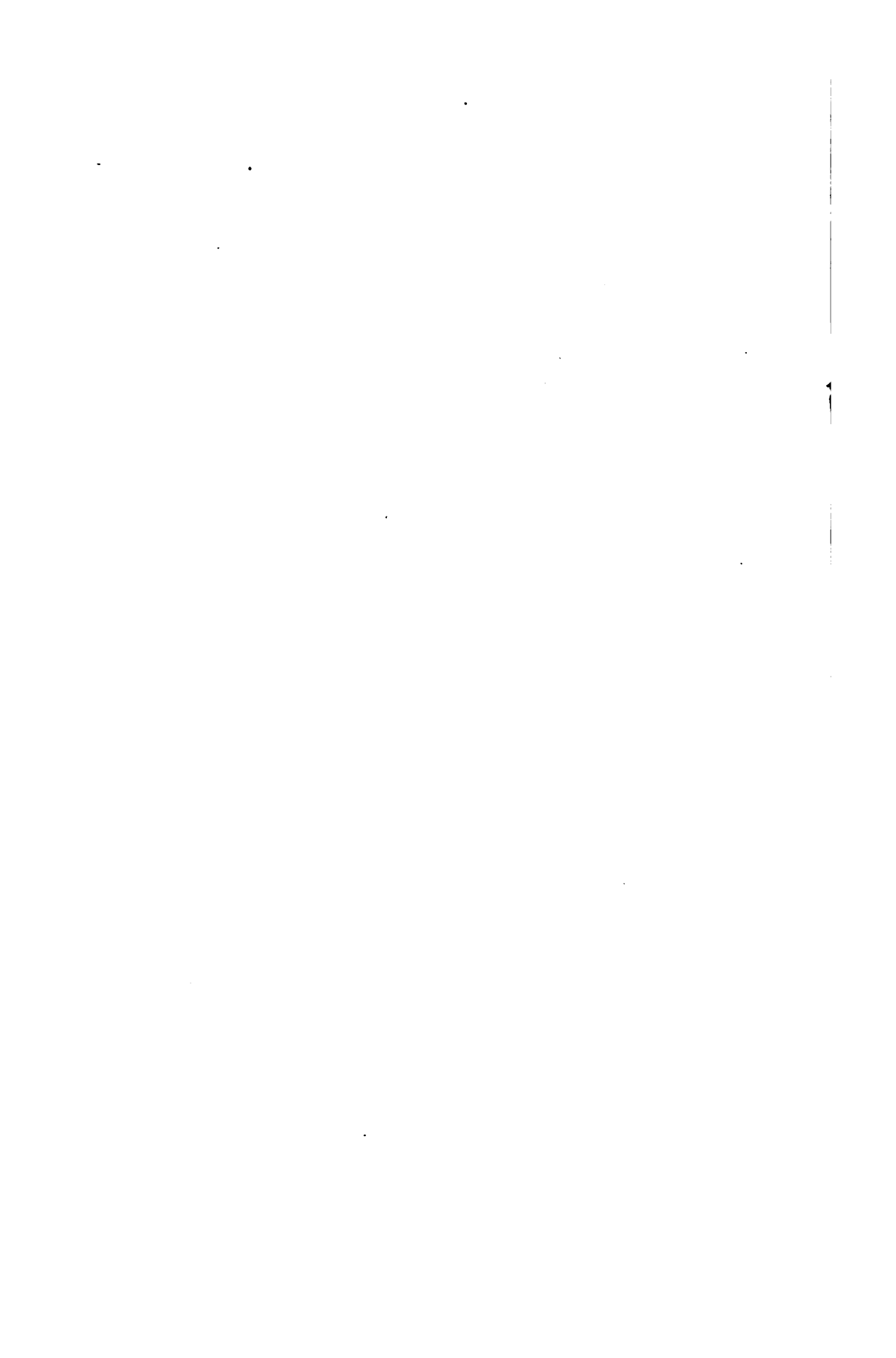
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ERRATA TO VOL. III.

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- Page 40, line 2, *for the, read that.*
Page 72, line 36, *for have, read had.*
Page 90, line 25, *for they, read it.*
Page 91, line 23, *for was, read were.*
Page 170, Note, *for affizii, read uffizii.*
 " *for invilili, read inviliti.*
 " *for chi, read che.*
Page 183, line 8, *for its, read his.*
Page 204, Note, *for erigere, read exigere.*
Page 251, line 31, *for Saxony, read Savoy.*



HISTORY

OF THE

REFORMATION.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ANABAPTISTS.

Varieties in the origin of the Anabaptists—general notion pervading them all—claims to preternatural communications—the re-baptism of their converts—substance of their opinions—mutual hostility between them and the Reformers—disputation at Worms—seven propositions of Cautius—at Basle with Œcolampadius—with Zwingle—their violence and expulsion from Zurich—they make many converts—Luther writes against them—his letters to Hesse and Link—remarks on their persecution and constancy under it—they gain a footing at Munster—John of Leyden—win over the Reformers—and get entire possession of the city—their conduct—appoint a Senate—plunder the churches—expel their opponents—proclaim community of property—burn all books except the Bible—death of the chief prophet Matthias—succeeded by John of Leyden—destruction of the churches—appointment of twelve judges—enactment of the law of polygamy, which is generally obeyed—John assumes the title of king—the book of their church—the restitution—their missionaries—Munster besieged and taken—John made prisoner, and after retracting his doctrines, executed—remarks—observations of Luther upon the transactions of Munster.

THE death of Munzer and the destruction or dispersion of his miserable followers did not extinguish the sect, of which he is usually considered as the founder—usually, but not properly; for various descriptions of fanatics sprang up in various countries at nearly the same time, and though they presently assumed, or acquired, the

common name of Anabaptist and professed too some opinions in common, yet in their origin they were entirely independent, not only of Munzer, or any other individual, but also of each other. They proceeded, indeed, in one sense, from the same source. There had long prevailed in every part of Christendom, and chiefly among the lowest classes, a latent impression, that the church of Rome could scarcely be the church of Christ; that some more perfect manifestation of His glory upon earth might presently be expected; and that this new church would be the pure assembly of His saints, unblemished by any stain of unrighteousness, unfettered by any institutions of human polity. The extreme ignorance of the great mass of the people fitted them to receive these vain notions; which were very general, of course with many modifications, when Luther and Zwingli raised the standard of insurrection. All, who were opposed, on any principle or from any interest, to the domination of Rome, rallied, in the first instance, round that standard; and those, whose understandings were informed by any light of knowledge or sense, adhered to it. But the men of uninstructed minds and heated imaginations soon began to complain, that the views of those Reformers were too narrow, and their spirit too cold and languid. There was too much reason in their words and proceedings, too little fancy and enthusiasm. Consequently, taking courage from the success, which attended even such lukewarm exertions, they no longer concealed their long cherished assurance of the coming kingdom of Christ, but began freely to proclaim *this* as the only true doctrine, as the only foundation of any real restoration of the church.

These men were of course fanatics. The leaders claimed the gift of immediate inspiration, the privilege of direct and frequent-intercourse with the Deity; and

their followers believed them. They had their visions and revelations of the past and of the future, and all those other implements of preternatural agency, which exert such irresistible control over the uneducated vulgar. Thus their numbers increased with great rapidity; and they followed everywhere, though everywhere disclaimed and rejected, in the train of the Reformation. These people professed in different places somewhat different notions. There was, however, one principle universally acknowledged by them: That all proselytes to their church must be *re-baptized* on admission: hence their name. Their general objection to the doctrine of infant baptism was indeed among the earliest of their religious scruples, and is to be found in all the formularies of their faith. But it seems probable that the practice existed with the greater part of them previously to the formal profession of the distinctive doctrine—the more so, when we consider how slightly their origin was connected with any exercise of reason, how merely visionary were their first propounded views, how low and illiterate the earliest of their reputed leaders.

We have already mentioned the pretensions and opinions proclaimed by Munzer. Comparing these with such other confessions as the Anabaptists afterwards published, at various times and places, we may perhaps consider the following as a summary of their doctrine, embracing only such tenets as were professed by the very great majority of their body:

That the true church or kingdom of Christ, over which He will preside on earth before the last day, would consist of His saints only, and be spotless; that that kingdom was already begun in the church of the Anabaptists; that the baptism of infants was an invention of the devil; that the body and blood of Christ were not essential in the Lord's Supper; that the outward word or sign or

sacrament was not the eternal word of God, but only a testimony of the inner word; that God still continued to reveal His will by dreams and visions; that all oaths were unlawful; that all things ought to be in common among the faithful; that the satisfaction of Christ was of no avail unless men walked in his footsteps and performed his commandments; that all usury, tithes, and tributes should be abolished; that there was no need of ministers and pastors, since it was lawful to every Christian to preach the gospel; that in the kingdom of Christ civil magistrates were entirely useless. The duty of polygamy was inculcated and practised (as we shall presently see) by the Anabaptists of Munster; they held besides a false opinion respecting the Incarnation; and it was further imputed to them that they maintained the freedom of the human will, and refused absolution to the lapsed sinner. Other tenets may have been professed by particular congregations, or the same expressed in somewhat different terms. But the above appears to have been the substance of the doctrinal peculiarities generally proclaimed by the sect.*

While the Anabaptists, on the one hand, regarded as very defective and carnal the principles and proceedings of the Reformers, and perceived a mere shade of distinction between the abominations of the Pope and those of Luther; the Reformers, on the other, were not at all better affected towards them, than they were towards the papists, or than the papists were towards both. They

* In the History of Brandt it is mentioned, that many Anabaptists were charged with the error of the Arians; and that the monks imputed that error to the writings of Erasmus. Unhappy Erasmus! he, to whose moderation even "the Lutheran Tragedy" was so terrible, as almost to drive him into ultra-papacy, that he should be accused by the ultra-papists of having fomented in any manner the naked madness of the Anabaptists! This it is to be temperate in periods of passion.

had this additional reason for their hatred—the Roman Catholics perceived the advantage that these extravagant and dangerous doctrines gave them in their contest with the Lutherans: for it was easy to impute to the latter all the enormities of their brother insurgents; or, if that calumny should fail, to derive from them a plausible argument against the very name of reformation—such are the monsters (they said) which spring up, so soon as any venture to stray away from the fold of the true shepherd. Thus it is that we observe the chiefs of the Reformation severally disclaiming and contending against those sectarians; while the Diets of Spires and Augsburg, on other religious subjects so discordant, agreed in the proscription of the Anabaptists with perfect unanimity.

In 1527, only two years after the defeat of Munzer, we learn that these fanatics were found in considerable force at Worms, in Silesia, Bavaria, Swabia, Switzerland. At Worms one Cautius published seven Articles*—very

* It is worth while to cite those Articles, as being one authentic expression of the leading doctrinal peculiarities of the Anabaptists:—

1. Verbum quod eloquimus, audimus, scribimus, non est vivum et æternum Dei Verbum, sed tantum testimonium et signum interni, ut externo etiam satisfiat.

2. Nullum externum Verbum vel signum vel sacramentum, nulla etiam externa promissio ejus est efficacæ, ut internum hominem consolari et confirmare possit.

3. Pædobaptismus non est a Deo, sed diserte contra Deum et Dei doctrinam per J. C. Filium ejus nobis propositam.

4. In Cœna Domini non est essentielle Corpus et Sanguis Christi.

5. Quicquid in Veteri Adamo cecidit et mortuum est, id in secundo Adamo, Jesu Christo, longe abundantius resurget et revivescet, idque ordine justo.

6. Jesus Christus Nazarena nulla alia ratione pro nobis passus est et satisfecit, nisi insistamus vestigiis ejus, et quam ille trivit eamus viam, et mandato Patris obediamus, perinde ut Filius, quisque sua mensura: qui aliter de Christo loquitur, sentit, aut credit is ex Christo idolum facit: id

similar to those above recorded,—and undertook their defence. The disputants who assailed him were not Papists, but Reformers. The Papists stood aloof, indifferent spectators of the strife; and Cochlæus lost not so favourable an occasion to exhort the Consul and Senate of Worms to abandon a heresy thus rent and lacerated, and to return to the peaceful bosom of the universal church.

In the course of the same year, Ecolampadius held a disputation with the Anabaptists at Basle on various points, of which the principal were Infant Baptism, Oaths and Civil Government. Zwingli had been much earlier confronted with them. In 1524 some of them came to that Reformer, and reproved him, with great seriousness and solemnity, for the dilatory and lukewarm manner in which he conducted the affairs of Christ's kingdom. They observed, that the promised time was now arrived and that the spirit demanded a more ardent zeal, without which there was no hope of salvation; and a formal separation among the citizens would become necessary to distinguish the pure church, consisting of the genuine sons of God.

Zwingli replied to them with much kindness: that such a schism was in itself unnecessary and could not be reckoned among the works of the spirit; that a spotless and perfect church was scarcely to be expected in this world; and that it would be a holier office in them to separate their flocks from the works of darkness, than from the communion of their fellow citizens. Then, in excuse for their proposed secession, they

quo domnes Doctores Theologi et Pseudo-evangelici cum toto mundo faciunt.

7. *Ut externus esus de pomo vetito neque Adamo neque posteris ejus nocuisset, nisi accessisset interna edendi cupiditas: ita, sine interna obedientia et summa cupiditate æternæ voluntati obtemperandi, corporalis J. C. passio non est vera satisfactio et reconciliatio cum Patre.*

pleaded their objection to the received doctrine of infant baptism, as an invention of Pope Nicholas II., suggested by Satan. This led to some warmth of discussion; and then the senate, perceiving the danger of an impending schism, appointed a public disputation between Zwingle and the chiefs of the seceders for Jan. 17, 1525. It was held and renewed on the 10th of the following March with no effect.

Meanwhile the Anabaptists exhibited their spirit after a fashion more congenial to them, than any attempt at reasoning. They paraded the streets in tumultuous procession; and having cast aside their zones and girded their loins, in imitation of Jonas and the ancient prophets, they ran from place to place and prophesied that the city must be swallowed up within a few days: Woe to Zurich! woe, woe! Repent ye! for the axe is laid at the root of the tree . . . * Then the government discovered the proper limits of forbearance. Men, who by their practice as well as doctrine renounced the duty of civil obedience and insulted the public tranquillity, became objects of public animadversion. Accordingly, some were imprisoned, others fined, others exiled; but it does not appear that any unnecessary severity was employed. Soon afterwards Zwingle published a "Confutation of the Catabaptists,"† addressed to all the ministers of the Gospel; and then a Treatise on Baptism, dedicated to the senate and people of St. Gal. These works were both written with great ability, and exposed, with perhaps no exaggeration, that seditious spirit which distinguished this unfortunate sect from other, not less absurd, but less dangerous enthusiasts.

* Gerdesius, *Histor. Evangel. Renov.*, t. i. § 126. Melchior Adam, *Vita Zwinglii*.

† "*Elenchus adversus Catabaptistas*"—a term of opprobrium which the Reformers fixed on the Anabaptists and continued generally to apply to them.

Nevertheless, in the actual religious excitement and the confusion both in conduct and in principles at that time necessarily prevalent, there were not wanting many converts even to a persecuted sect. In 1527 we find Zwingle deploring this, in terms of great moderation and sense, in a letter to Conrad Somius, evangelist of Ulm: "It afflicts me that the faithful are thus led astray by the Catabaptists. But be of good cheer; they will return if rightly treated. Their seducers are vagabonds. They get round poor women, and men too, and squeeze out of them anything that they may have laid by. Thus they want nothing; but neither can they remain long anywhere, since they are safe nowhere. . . . They will have this effect—they will somewhat retard the work of Christ, but they will bring nothing substantial to maturity. For those who desert to them are abandoned and profligate persons; and, when they discover that the adventure does not succeed, they forsake the connexion, and then take upon them to contend, that the whole revelation of Christ is a mere fable."

At the same time the government persisted in enforcing its edicts; and one Felix Mangius, who continued, nevertheless, to rebaptize his converts, was cast by its order (on Jan. 5, 1527) into the river, where he perished. In advancing to his fate he was animated with the martyr's intrepidity, and returned thanks to God for permitting him to bear witness to the truth by his death.

In like manner, a disputation was held at Augsburg during this year between the Reformers and Anabaptists, by order of the senate. It terminated in the condemnation of the latter, of whom a hundred persons of both sexes were seized and visited with various degrees of severity.

The Saxon divines displayed their zeal in this cause as earnestly as those of Switzerland. In the beginning

of 1528, Luther wrote a somewhat celebrated letter in confutation of their errors, mainly directed to the question of infant baptism. In this composition, after expressing some indignation that one Balthazar Hubmeier, a chief of the sect, had insinuated its close alliance with his own church, and boasting that electoral Saxony was unstained either by that or the sacramentarian heresy, he proceeded to condemn the cruelty with which the persons of the offenders were treated in the *pontifical* states. In the course of his subsequent argument, he maintained the doctrine that the souls of infants were actually imbued with the necessary faith, wrought within them by God in an inscrutable manner; and the same was defended by Melancthon, in a tract, which he wrote about the same time, on the same subject.*

To the honour of Luther be it recorded, that he discouraged any direct interference, for the civil punishment of these fanatics, on the part of the evangelical clergy. In a letter, of Jan. 27, 1528, to John Hess of Breslau he wrote: "The same things are going on in Bavaria; the Anabaptists can be restrained neither by fire nor sword; they desert wives, children, families and possessions. Thus Satan rages in this, as it were, the last hour. It is my opinion that you should not betray them to the government: they will betray themselves, and then the senate will expel them from the city. There is still lingering among them all the spirit of Munzer, concerning the destruction of the impious and the earthly reign of the saints. Thus too Cellarius prophesies in a book just published—the whole of that spirit is seditious."

On the 14th of the July following, in answer to a question proposed to him by Link, whether it were lawful for the authorities to put to death the false prophets,

* Seckendorf. lib. ii. sect. 13, § 40.

Luther affirmed that it was not; but his reasons were those of expediency, not of justice or mercy. "They deserve death; but the precedent would be dangerous, and might be turned against the innocent. We might have such consequences from this example, as we see in the papists and the Jews before Christ; among whom the statute for the execution of false prophets was, in process of time, perverted to the destruction of holy prophets and innocent men. The same, I fear, might happen among us. . . . Wherefore I can by no means admit that false teachers should be put to death; it is enough to banish them; and if posterity shall think proper to abuse this punishment, their sin will be less and they will hurt none but themselves. . . ."*

In spite, however, of any more moderate counsels, which the leading divines may through prudence or charity have suggested, the Anabaptists were visited from every quarter with the severest inflictions. Doubtless among their principles there were some, which tended to the overthrow of social order; and among those, who professed those principles, many were deliberately prepared to enforce them. Such men deserved their fate. But mixed with them were many pious and well-intentioned enthusiasts, who were victims to a vague desire for some purer form of Christianity. And in the enmity, which both the great religious parties bore against them, it was not probable that they would be judged or sentenced with any nice discrimination. In many instances, the mere heresy was held sufficient for their condemnation; and many among them perished, not because they were convicted of any seditious practice or design, but because their creed was stigmatised with error.

* "Satis est eos relegari; qua pœna si posterius abuti volent, mitius tamen peccabunt et sibi tantum nocebunt. . . ."

Meanwhile they bore their sufferings with almost unusual resolution. Neither threats, nor the description, nor the very spectacle, of each other's martyrdom, moved them to retractation, or the show of fear. And they persisted in the defence of their fanciful absurdities with exactly the same constancy, or triumph, or joy, which marked the devotion of the earliest and best among the manifold denominations of victims, who have shed their innocent blood in the name of Christ.

The political effect of the decrees, so generally enforced against the Anabaptists, was to prevent their assembling anywhere in great numbers, so as to endanger seriously the public tranquillity. It was in most cases the object of the authorities to disperse rather than to destroy them, and in this they were for a certain time successful. During the eight years, which followed the death of Munzer, we do not read of any very important outbreak, or of any attempt made by large bodies to overthrow the institutions of society. Scattered in parties over the greater part of Europe, especially of Germany, they were everywhere suspected and repelled, and there was not yet any town or province, in which they had obtained an establishment, or indeed in which they had secured a refuge. At length they acquired that advantage; but they acquired it in such a manner, and applied it to such a purpose, as only to aggravate and justify the general distrust and hatred which attended their name.

Munster, one of the principal cities of Westphalia, remained until the year 1532 in the uninterrupted profession of the ancient religion. At that time an evangelical preacher, named Bernard Rothman, gained a footing there, and was presently followed by multitudes of the middle and lower classes. The attention of the government was awakened. A public disputation was pro-

claimed. The Roman Catholics refused to defend their opinions; their churches were immediately transferred to the Reformers; and some tumults, which followed, terminated in a compromise to the advantage of the latter. Thus matters rested in February, 1533; when John Boekholt, a young and violent Anabaptist, commonly called John of Leyden, by trade a tailor, entered the city and immediately engaged in private controversy with the evangelical leaders. He made converts and was joined by many strangers; and these, still fearing the authorities, propagated their opinions in nocturnal meetings. When this was discovered, they were expelled; but now feeling their strength, they returned back by another road, and openly proclaimed their mission from God and their determination to perfect His work.

Rothman passed over to their party; and, though the career of Lutheran orthodoxy was manfully defended by a theological envoy of the Landgrave of Hesse, named Fabricius, and though the Senate remained faithful to that cause, still the fanatics, by the weight of numerical force and by the zeal and fury of their proceedings, were finally triumphant. They rushed about the streets and public places, as was their usage, crying out—"Repent and be baptized, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Some joined them through simplicity—many through fear. Some sanguinary conflicts took place, in which they were not defeated. Till at length their brother enthusiasts, who resided in all the neighbouring places, perceiving how much higher were the hopes of the sect at Munster than in any other quarter, and doubtless inferring that Christ had at length selected that, as the capital of His earthly kingdom, flocked thither in fearful multitudes. On this, the more reasonable portion of the population, those especially who had any possessions,

speedily withdrew their persons and such of their property as they were able, and left the city in the undisputed occupation of the Anabaptists. This took place in February, 1534.

Then came the crisis of their history. Then was applied to them the decisive test, by which posterity was to form its impartial judgment, whether, like so many other defeated sects, they had been calumniated by their persecutors, and their morality slandered in order to justify the execution of their persons, or whether they had merited their misfortunes. In adversity, they had exhibited all the Christian heroism of the most holy martyrs. They had now their moment of triumph—a field was opened for the display of their wisdom and moderation. How did they bear themselves in those circumstances? By what demeanour did they demonstrate the purity of their principles? By what acts did they signify the holiness of the spirit of which they boasted?

Their first act was in direct opposition to the most dangerous, though the most absurd, of their principles: they established a civil government. They chose a senate, of course from their own body; and appointed two consuls, one of whom, named Cnipperdolling, was a man above all others conspicuous for his phrenzy. Their next act was sacrilege—they plundered all the churches without any mercy or discrimination. And then they paraded the streets with their fanatical cry of repentance, and expelled from the city the remnant of their opponents; we do not read, however, though they are accused of some cruelty in this proceeding, that they shed any blood. They seized the property of those expelled; and then their chief prophet, one Matthias, under whose guidance these affairs had been mostly conducted, commanded the faithful to bring all their substance

sceptre, with all the accustomed pomp and circumstance of royalty.

About this time they published the book of their church, under the name of "The Restitution." Among other matters it contained the following principles : That the kingdom of Christ on earth was commenced in themselves ; that the people had full power to abrogate all civil government ; that the actual ministers of the Church ought to assume the right of the sword, and forcibly constitute the new republic ; that Luther and the Pope were false prophets, of whom the more wicked was Luther ; that no one would be saved, who did not contribute all his property to the community ; that Christ did not assume his body from the flesh of the Virgin Mary ; that the marriage of those who were not of the true faith was harlotry and adultery, rather than marriage, &c. &c.

For the propagation of this "true faith" they sent forth eight and twenty missionaries, appointing to them their several districts. But as soon as they reached those places, and began to raise the wonted cry of repentance, and to proclaim the approaching reign of Christ, they were seized and questioned respecting their acts and doctrines. The absurdities, which they advanced in reply, were merely a sort of commentary on the doctrines of "The Restitution." They were tortured, but betrayed no weakness ; and at length, as they persisted in refusing to acknowledge any civil government, except that of their own king, they were punished with death.

Meanwhile the city was closely besieged and the reign of madness hastened to its termination. Pressed by the extremity of famine, many of the miserable inhabitants perished, many escaped from the place so emaciated, as to awaken the pity even of a religious enemy. Those who

remained, received the assurance of a perfect amnesty, if they would surrender the king with some few others. But his severity* and vigilance deterred them from the attempt; and he resolved, so long as he had any means of subsistence, to maintain his monarchy. At length on the night of June 24, 1535, through the treachery of a deserter, the besiegers gained admission within the walls. The fanatics made a very brave and for some time successful resistance, but were at length overpowered. The mercy which they implored was granted to them. Rothman was killed in the assault; but John of Leyden and Cnipperdolling fell into the hands of the victors. These two, together with another chief named Crechting, were led from place to place for the next six months, as a spectacle, not so much of triumph to the orthodox, as of humiliation and instruction to the wretches who had been deluded. Divines were sent to argue with them in their captivity, on the principal doctrines of their sect; and so convincing, under such circumstances, were their reasonings, that the king himself is represented to have yielded to them. He even promised, on condition of his own impunity, that he would bring back all his subjects, scattered in great numbers throughout Holland, Brabant, England, Frisia, to obedience to the established authorities. This offer was sufficient for the purpose of the conquerors. He was then conducted back to Munster, and in January, 1536, suffered; together with his two associates, a cruel and lingering death.†

* It is related that, when one of his wives expressed or insinuated some doubt respecting the divinity of his mission, he assembled the rest together and cut off her head with his own hands. They are said to have applauded the act of justice, and to have danced round the bleeding body.

† Gerdesius, tom. iii. § 8, et seq. See also "Antonii Corvini ad G. Spalatinum Epist. scripta in 1536, De miserabili Anabaptistarum obsidione." Also "Warhaftige Historie, wie das Evangelium zu Münster

During the affairs of Munster, seditious attempts of a like description were made by the Anabaptists in various other quarters, but for the most part they were instantly repressed. It would be little profitable to enumerate them ; still less so to detail the tedious particulars of crime or absurdity recorded of individuals or parties composing this miserable sect. Enough of their proceedings has been already related to show the character of the whole, and my notice has been confined to those, which are the proper object of history. It is sufficient to say, that in every instance the insurgents consisted of the lowest classes of the people ; even among their chiefs it was rare to find any one of respectable origin, or decent education. The flattering prospect of the earthly kingdom of Christ deluded the mere enthusiasts. The hungry rabble were attracted by the promise, to them not less seductive, of community of property—and thus the sect was constituted. The sufferings, which everywhere attended its suppression, were necessary for the peace of society, and were demanded by human justice. Yet a deeper reflection on such calamities leads us to regard them only as penalties paid by the community for the ignorance or delusions of the great mass of its members—ignorance permitted by the jealousy or contempt of the ruling powers ; delusions fostered from no better motives—and of which, the consequences, though they do sometimes burst with a terrible vengeance upon the higher classes, for the most part and by the forbearance of a retributive Providence descend upon the multitude—upon those, whose education has been neglected, whose prejudices have been en-

angefangen und darnach durch die Widdertäufer widder aufgehört hat." By Henry Dorpius of Munster, A.D. 1536. *Autographa Reformatorum*. Both these seem fair accounts. That of Corvinus, who was an eye-witness of the execution of the king and his accomplices, is especially marked by a religious and humane spirit.

couraged, whose best natural principles have been corrupted, in the notion that they would thus become more obsequious subjects to Church and State. There can be no security against such convulsions, except in the general intelligence of the people. The government, which would refuse such light, holds but a trembling balance between despotism and anarchy; and though for a while it may turn away the tempest from itself, yet the blood of the sufferers is not unseen from above; and a long and fearful account must yet be rendered up by those, whom God has appointed to preside over the destinies of His creatures.

This account cannot be better concluded than by a specimen of the remarks elicited from Luther by the memorable transactions at Munster.*

“In what language shall I lament and deplore those abandoned men? The fact itself proves that the place is a nest of cacodæmons. Yet have we reason to celebrate the infinite mercy of God. For though Germany deserves, for its contempt of the Gospel and its insults on God’s name and the blood of holy men which it has shed, the severest inflictions of the Lord, yet He still restrains the violent assaults of Satan and checks his career and mercifully admonishes us, by this real tragedy of Munster, and warns us to amend our lives. For that subtle spirit would choose a very different method to attain his purposes, were he not checked by God; while under this restraint his rage is moderated within prescribed boundaries. A spirit, which designs the overthrow of the faith, will not bring about its work by the introduction of polygamy. For the wickedness of the thing is manifest to all, and it meets merely with men’s abhorrence. Civil government may indeed be disturbed

* “Auf die neue Zeitung von Münster, D. M. Lutherus.”

by such means, but the kingdom of Christ must be assailed with very different weapons.

“The spirit that would seduce the world must not aim at rule and dominion, and seize the sword, and affect the tyrant. This is gross, and all perceive the drift of it; he must advance to his end by more obscure and artful paths. To adopt a mean obsolete costume, to compose the countenance to austerity, to fast, to fix the eyes upon the ground, to refrain from the touch of money, to abstain from meat, to fly from matrimony as from poison, to hold all civil authority as profane, to cast away the sword and profess contempt for dignities—this is the way to creep towards the sceptre and the keys, and gain stealthy possession of them—this is the method by which even the wise and spiritual may be circumvented. This is a beautiful devil, with plumage more splendid than any peacock or pheasant. But thus impudently to seize the crown, to take not one wife only, but as many as caprice or lust demands: oh, it is a mere boy devil, a devil at his A, B, C, a school-deviling, who has not learnt his alphabet—or rather it is the right well-instructed devil, only bound by God’s hands with chains so heavy as to hold him motionless. It is for our warning, to prepare us for the coming of a more subtle devil, who will attack us no longer with his A, B, C, but with the real hard text. And if this deviling at his letters can do such things, what will he not do when he comes to be an intelligent, knowing, instructed, lawyer-like, theological devil? . . .”^{*} He concluded by recommending the word of God as the only remedy against

^{*} “Aber so unverschämpt nach der Kröne greiffen. . . . ah, das ist entweder ein junger a. b. c. Teuffel, oder schul Teuffelin und noch nicht recht Buchstaben kan. . . . Denn that er solches, so er ein grammatisches Teuffelin seyn mus, was sol er thun können, wenn er ein vernünffniger, weyßer, gelehrter, juristischer, theologischer Teuffel sein künd? . . .”

such calamities; by censuring the princes and prelates who opposed its free circulation, and by confuting the doctrinal errors and ridiculous pretensions of the Anabaptists.

This composition is very characteristic of its author, both as an evidence of his general sagacity and good sense, and also as dwelling, and even refining, upon that diabolical agency with which his mind was so constantly impressed, that there is not a book or tract, scarcely an epistle, from his pen wherein some allusion is not made to it.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FROM THE SECOND DIET OF SPIRES TO THE DIET OF
AUGSBURG.—CHARLES IN ITALY.

Appeal and deputation of the Protestants to the Emperor—Charles determined to support the church—consults his council—resolution taken by him—his arrival in Italy—his ill reception of the Protestant deputation—various meetings among the Protestants in 1529—at Rotach, Schwabach, Zerbst, Smalcald, Torgau—question as to union with the Sacramentaries—principles of Luther—his policy—his deep religious feelings—extract from a letter to the Elector—conference of Marburg and subsequent meetings of the Protestants—meeting between the Emperor and Pope at Bologna—council on the affairs of the church—speech of Gattinara—reply of the Pope—answer of Charles—remarks on this debate—subsequent private negotiations—in which the Emperor urges the immediate convocation of a council and the Pope dissuades it—which ends in a compromise, that the Diet should be summoned at Augsburg—edict of convocation.

IMMEDIATELY after the dissolution of the Diet of Spire, the Protestant chiefs, willing to avert the threatened calamities, assembled to deliberate at Nuremberg. There they drew up an appeal of justification to the Emperor, and it received (on May 27) nearly the same signatures which had been affixed to the Protest. In their accustomed tone of respectful determination, they reasserted in this document the new principles laid down at Spire, the sacred rights of conscience and the freedom of the few from the control of the many, on matters pertaining to their salvation. They expressed in a few clear sentences their own view of the origin of the Reformation, ascribing it to the more general knowledge of the Scriptures and the consequent discovery of numerous errors

and abuses, which had indeed some plea in antiquity, but which were not the less false and scandalous from being ancient. They represented, that the states of the empire could suggest no other means of restoring peace, than the convocation of a free council; that the Emperor approved of that expedient, and therefore that it was a mockery, before the assembling of such a council, to condemn and persecute either party; that the Protestants would never yield to violence, nor to any other authority, except the manifest evidence of Scripture; that the errors of the church had been admitted by Pope Adrian himself; that the Edict of Worms could not possibly be enforced, because, whatever the rulers might attempt, the people were now too well enlightened to submit to it; that the Emperor might count upon their loyal obedience in all matters, excepting only those which related to religion. This remonstrance, and together with it a copy of the epistle of Adrian to the Diet of Nuremberg, they committed to the charge of three deputies, to be immediately presented to the Emperor. Those agents were not indeed discreetly selected, nor so as to give any dignity, or secure any favour, to the mission. They were persons of no rank or consideration in the empire, and one of them, the burgomaster of Memmingen, was positively exceptionable through his marriage with a nun. They set out, however, on their embassy.

Meanwhile, every act of Charles's policy showed his intention to support the church. His treaties with the Pope (June 20) and with Francis (August 5) contained secret articles, pledging him to the extirpation of the Lutheran heresy. He renewed and confirmed a decree to the same effect, which he had published in Spain three years before; and he caused to be issued at Brussels (on the 14th of October) an edict against all buyers, sellers, readers, and printers of the offensive books, in

which very heavy penalties were denounced against any who should entertain persons suspected, or should themselves, even in their private conversations, so much as whisper any religious scruples.*

Yet with all this he was not so entirely abandoned to the papal interests as would appear from these measures. That he might take a firm resolution on this part of his policy before he departed for Italy, he formally consulted his cabinet as to the most advisable means of suppressing the religious revolt. There were two opinions: the high ecclesiastical party maintained, as usual, that every innovation was dangerous, that every concession was impolitic, and that the only remedy for the existing evil was the armed hand of power. But there were others who argued more moderately, that, as abuses did notoriously exist, it was the better wisdom to correct them; since it was clear that they would be endured no longer, and that, if not removed by the authority of the Pope and the princes, they would be presently rooted up in defiance of it. Charles inclined to the latter counsel. He saw no expedient for the pacification of Germany so promising as a general council, and he embarked, with this conviction, to receive his crown at the pontifical hands.

Such then were his resolutions—to extinguish the heresy, but at the same time to amend, by a constitutional reformation, the abuses on which it was founded—when the deputies from Nuremberg presented themselves before him. They found him at Placentia; he had not yet reached the papal states, nor engaged in any personal communication with the Pope. On the 21st of September he admitted them, though with little courtesy, to an audience. They shortly explained the object

* Scultet. Ann. Evangel. ann. 1529, p. 247, ed. Heidel.

of their mission, and laid before him the protest of Spires, together with the letter of Adrian and the Hundred Grievances of Germany. He promised them a written answer, and on the 13th of October he delivered it by his secretary Schweiss; it was to this effect:—

That the Emperor, deploring the divisions of Germany, gave his entire approbation to the late Edict of Spires, as an instrument for the repression of sectarian innovation and for the concord of the empire; that he deeply lamented the dissent of the Protestants; that a council was equally desired by all parties, not least so by himself; but that it would not have been necessary, had the statutes of the empire, and that of Worms most especially, been observed; that on these occasions the minority ought to yield obedience to the larger and the better portion; that the Elector and the princes of his party had already been commanded to execute the decree under pain of the imperial displeasure; that this was essential for the union of Germany against the Turks; and that he should presently descend into that country with all his forces for the purpose of protecting it from invasion.

On receiving this reply the deputies read to the secretary the remonstrance, committed to them at Nuremberg, and delivered a copy of it for the information of the Emperor. He was much irritated by this freedom, and even placed them under confinement; but after a few days they were set at liberty, and two of them were allowed to return to Germany. The third, named Kaden, who was the representative of the Landgrave, was detained some little time longer; but he too found means to escape to his country, and the great Roman Catholic historian seems to take pride in the forbearance of Charles, that he violated the laws of nations and the

sacred character of ambassadors with so much moderation.*

Meanwhile the Protestant States, informed of the measures that Charles had already taken, and foreseeing the blow that he was meditating, took counsel together during the summer and autumn for the formation of an alliance. The Landgrave of Hesse was the most earnest and active in this endeavour, and for its effectual success, even as a measure of defence, he strongly urged the great expediency of including the Sacramentaries in the proposed treaty. But the Elector, supported by the Margrave of Brandenburg, hesitated. It was in vain that the Landgrave, in two letters written on the 17th and 19th of July, essayed to overcome his scruples. He pleaded, that every difference was not sufficient to justify a separation; that that which divided them from their brother-reformers was not essential; that it might be healed with little difficulty, and that he trusted to be himself the means of healing it. At any rate, in their mutual liability to error, some indulgence should be shown to those involved in it: while it was assuredly cruel to exclude from alliance, through a single doctrinal defect, cities of great consideration and zealous in the service of the Reformation.

No fewer than three meetings took place in the course of the summer of 1529 on this subject. Soon after the recess of Spires the Elector and Landgrave made a preliminary engagement with the cities of Strasburg, Nuremberg, and Ulm; on which they agreed to consult further, in the month of June, inviting the Duke of Brunswick and the Margrave of Brandenburg to assist at their deliberations. They met accordingly at Rotach,

* Pallavicino, lib. ii. cap. xviii.

in the territory of Coburg. But there the Elector's envoy appeared, with an express instruction to confer with the Nurembergers only; as the other two cities were suspected of the Sacramentarian opinions. Accordingly there was no result, and the congress was further adjourned to the 24th of August, when it was to be re-assembled at Schwabach.

Meanwhile, a conference took place on August 7, at Zerbst, in which Eric of Brunswick, the Bishop of Osnabrück, and Henry Duke of Mecklenburg, took part—but with no alteration in the policy adopted at Rotach. The next assembly was at Schwabach; and there it was more formally and deliberately decided, that unity on the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist was essential to any religious alliance among Christians. A profession of faith was accordingly drawn up and signed by the Lutheran party; and, having been read at the first session of the assembly, was declared to be the test of evangelical truth and the symbol of the proposed alliance. It was composed by Luther and his associates; and, after being subsequently presented at Smalcald and Torgau, became the basis of the confession of Augsburg.*

The Landgrave, who had opposed these restrictions with all his power, was so little able to comprehend the principle on which they stood, as to fall into the unworthy suspicion, that the Elector was meditating an act of treachery. Some communication, which the latter had lately held with Ferdinand, confirmed that supposition. Accordingly, he addressed to him on the 14th of September a still more decided despatch, requesting an immediate and direct reply.† At the same time he inti-

* Marhein. T. ii. kap. 13.

† “ Will sich Ew. Lbd. nun gegen den Kaiser wehren, so er uns davon dringen will, so schreib mirs Ew. Lbd.; wolt er euch nicht wehren und leiden, oder darvon abfallen, als ich zu Gott nicht hoffe, so schreib

mated that, if he should be deserted by the Elector, he should apply to other resources, and take different means to provide for his safety. On the 23rd the Elector returned a very calm and dignified reply, containing some strong declarations of his own integrity. But these were by no means satisfactory to the Landgrave, since they were neutralised by the expression of great doubts as to the lawfulness of any opposition to the Emperor on religious grounds; and the writer seemed indeed disposed to maintain, that, to employ any earthly weapons in defence of the word of God, would be nothing less than a violation of that word.

The Elector acted in this delicate conjuncture on the counsel of Luther. To his great theologian he had recourse in his perplexity; he received the most decided instructions, and he followed them. The question was twofold: Whether any confederacy against the Emperor for a religious object could be justified? Whether such confederacy could without impiety include the Sacramentaries? In both cases Luther at various times maintained the negative with his accustomed confidence.

In respect to the former, he so exalted the imperial prerogative, as to maintain that the subjects of individual princes were bound by a still stronger allegiance to the Emperor;* and that it was not lawful for any one to

mirs Ew. Lbd. und was ich mich zu Ew. Lbd. veströsten soll, so ich überzogen würde: denn es will die nothdurf erfodern, dass einer weiss, was er sich zum andern zu veströsten weiss, &c. &c. . ." Apud Marhein. T. ii. kap. xiii.

* "So sind ja aller Fürsten unterthan auch des Kaisers unterthan, je mehr denn den Fürsten. . . ." *Bedenken* of March 6, 1530. Brennius, in a treatise published in the preceding winter, carried the principles of obedience still farther, and was immediately confuted by the lawyers, who were in this instance the guardians of the constitutional independence. The principal compositions of Luther on this subject are—A letter to the Elector written on May 22, 1529 (No. 1104), which had been

protect by force the subjects of the Emperor against the Emperor, who was their lord. At the same time, however, he conceded, that if the Emperor should expressly command the princes to persecute their own subjects for religion's sake, they would be justified in refusing obedience. He held too, and perhaps with more reason, that the proposed alliances were not yet necessary; that the Catholics would not dare to make any aggression; and that the Providence, which had hitherto extended to the faithful its manifest protection, would assuredly not desert them, so long as their foremost and dearest object should continue to be what it had been—God and his kingdom.

The arguments, by which he rejected the connexion with the Sacramentaries, were such as these: That, as religion was the basis of the proposed treaty, and the defence of the truth its object, it would be nothing less than impiety to include in it any, who were notoriously infected with an essential error, and who refused to correct that error: That it was a single defect in doctrine, which caused the expulsion of Arius from the Catholic church: That the very willingness, so constantly expressed by the Sacramentaries, to retract their opinion on scriptural proof, was alone sufficient evidence of their insincerity (a strange argument from Luther's pen!): and that, so far from forming any such alliance, the Protestant princes should rather make it a boast to the Emperor, that they had repudiated, not only the abuses of the Roman church, but all the errors of Anabaptists, Sacramentaries, and other fanatics.

The principle of abstaining from all communion with any whom we may consider in error, is at least intelligible preceded by a "Gutachten" in the name of himself and his colleagues; another on Nov. 18, 1529 (No. 1170); and a third on March 6, 1530 (No. 1191).

and assurance. In the strong sense of the holiness of his cause, he felt an invincible repugnance to the interference of any earthly power—he required no human aid or cunning—his entire dependence was on God. And among other proofs of his desire to place the confidence of others where his own was fixed, it may be mentioned, that he translated about that time the 46th Psalm—“God is our refuge”—into German verse; and having set it to such music, as he judged likely to erect and exhilarate the downcast spirits of the people, he sent it forth to be chanted in the churches of the faithful.

The following passage in a letter from Luther to the Elector, of November 18, 1529, discovers the feelings under which he acted at that crisis:—

“We know with certainty, we have had experience in the manifest aid which God has hitherto afforded us, that our cause is not our own cause, but the cause of God himself. That is our confidence and trust; and therefore has He taken up the defence of his own affairs with the faithfulness of a father; so that we are obliged to recognise a work above our skill and might, and which no sense of ours would have enabled us to accomplish. Wherefore, I do submissively beseech and exhort you, be confident and unshaken in this affair. We shall, by God’s will, perform more by prayers and supplications, than they by all their insolence. Only let us keep our hands pure from blood and crime; and even if it should come to this, as I think it will not, that the Emperor should demand my person, or those of others; then will we, by God’s help, come forward of ourselves, so that you shall be in no danger on our account—a declaration which I have often made to your blessed brother, my most gracious master, Frederic. If you would defend my faith, or that of any other, you cannot do it; but let every one for himself defend his

own faith, and not another's, if it should go so far, that the Emperor should compel us to this. . . .”*

It was after the failure of his first attempts, that the Landgrave held the conference at Marburg. Again disappointed, he was not yet deterred from renewing the suspended negotiations. The Protestants assembled on the 29th of November, at Smalcald. Philip pressed upon the princes his former arguments and proposals, strengthened by the nearer appearance of danger. The Elector, still acting under the same influence, still exacting the same religious unanimity as a condition of alliance, again rejected them. The assembly then adjourned to January 6, 1530, at Nuremberg, on the understanding that those only should be present who were prepared to subscribe to the articles of Schwabach. Accordingly few attended. The imperial cities, of which the deputies had appeared at Smalcald, and who formed indeed the numerical majority of that meeting, were excluded with the single exception of Nuremberg,† by the stipulation imposed by the Lutherans; the conference was again dissolved without coming to any resolution. On this the senate and people of Strasburg, despairing of a general confederacy among the Protestant powers, formed a defensive alliance for fifteen years with the two Swiss cantons, Zurich and Basle; and this was the first political alliance, formed on religious grounds, among any of the adherents of the Reformation.

* The Landgrave's chancellor, George Bogler, replied to this, and, after trying to show that the Emperor was the natural lord of the Protestants, he urged that “whenever he attempts to rule over their faith, souls and consciences, he goes too far and usurps the prerogative of God—in which case no man is bound longer to obey either the Emperor, or those in authority under him.”

† Weinsheim, Reutlingen and Weissenberg, places of less importance, were represented by the envoy of Nuremberg. Heilbron accepted the articles, but took no part in the conference.

Another meeting of the Protestants was held in March, when the peril seemed almost imminent, with the same desperate object. But the theologians were still firm in their scruples, and those scruples still determined the policy of the Elector—so that the Landgrave, after almost a year of uninterrupted exertion, reluctantly perceived that he had not gained a single step towards the accomplishment of his object.

While this humble band of conscientious Christians was conducting its fruitless deliberations—fruitless, so far as the Elector was concerned, through the very scruples of a religious sincerity—and balancing, in its little assemblies, between its reverence for established authorities and its fears for its own safety; its powerful enemies in Italy were making a far more imposing display of majesty, if not of power. On the 5th of November, the Emperor, escorted by five-and-twenty Cardinals, who received him on the frontiers, as well as by all the nobles of his court, made his entry into Bologna. The Pope was there awaiting his arrival, and, on the news of his approach, went forth from his palace to meet him. Historians have been careful to record how, when he perceived Charles at some distance, seated under a canopy, he rose and saluted him thrice; how the Emperor in his turn fell on his knees, and in that attitude kissed his feet and hands, and then his face; and then addressed him as follows:

“I am extremely sensible, most holy Father, of this happiness, which I have so long desired, of seeing your holiness, and conversing with you on the divisions of the church and the means of ending them. For, God is my witness, I have an ardent and sincere desire to appease the troubles that disturb it, and to secure by a lasting peace its future repose and prosperity. I pray you to be persuaded, that I will defend, so long as I shall live,

the Christian faith and the Catholic church. May God prosper my designs !" The Pope in reply expressed his approbation of those sentiments ; and, in thrice saluting the Emperor, observed, with what sorrow it was, that he had permitted so great a prince to kiss his hands and his feet, but that he had no power to dispense with the usages of his predecessors.

These ceremonies were succeeded by more important matters. A grand council was presently summoned for solemn deliberation on the affairs of the church. All the magnificence of both the courts was assembled and displayed—on the one side the gorgeous parade of ecclesiastical wealth and pomp, the military pride and blazonry of the nobles of Spain and Italy on the other—and the subject to be discussed before them was that most nearly affecting the interests and the feelings of both.

Charles instructed his Chancellor, Gattinara, to expound to the Assembly, in some detail, the views and intentions of his master ; and though no copy of his discourse is extant, it is certain that he spoke to the following effect :

That the Emperor had regarded with deep affliction the dissensions, which had arisen in his days, and of which the violence appeared to be increasing rather than abating ; and that, among all the duties which Providence had imposed upon him, none was nearer to his heart, than that of restoring the tranquillity of the church ; yet, that the regulation of those matters rested for the most part with the Pope, and that his co-operation was necessary for the accomplishment of their common object ; that the maintenance of a Christian purity both in ceremony and in doctrine must be the basis of their endeavours ; that, if any errors or superstitions stained that heavenly doctrine, they should be removed ; that, if that discipline were in any way vitiated, it should be restored ;

that, if the morals of the clergy and the people were corrupted, as indeed they were, they should be reformed; in short, for the permanent re-establishment of peace and morality, that a system of Christian doctrine should be compiled, having its source in the word of God, and imposed with strictness both upon the people and their ministers. He then continued :

That his Majesty, having deeply reflected on this subject, and taken advice from his wisest counsellors, had come to the conclusion, that there was no expedient more salutary to the church, or more worthy of the sovereign pontiff and of a Christian prince, than to convoke a general and free council for the Scriptural determination of all controversies; that this council should be assembled immediately, and composed of the most eminent doctors of all nations; that perfect freedom of debate should be allowed; and that the articles there recommended, after receiving the sanction of the pope, should become the established doctrine of the Christian world, and be supported, if necessary, by the penal interference of the civil powers. He concluded his discourse by pressing this expedient upon the Pope with great urgency, as affording the only reasonable prospect of any lasting tranquillity, and promised the entire co-operation, the presence, the advice and the authority of his master.

The Pope, being previously acquainted with the Emperor's opinion, replied with readiness and great ability.

After alluding to his own exclusive prerogative in the convocation of councils, he proceeded to say : That he could discover only two expedients of any promise for the suppression of the religious rebellion; that the council was one of these, the use of military force the other; that he had reflected profoundly upon the subject, but that he had not decided in favour of the council; that his objections to this method proceeded from no personal

motive, seeing with how indifferent an eye he surveyed the transient dignities of this world, and how worthless and vexatious were all the pomps and riches which embarrassed the chair of St. Peter; but only from a deliberate conviction that the remedy would prove useless; that on examining the elements of the present discord, he had found them to be of three kinds:—*First*, there were doctrines asserted, which were not only false, but manifestly irrational—such as those of the Anabaptists—such as the absolute nullity of the human will, and others; it would be degrading to assemble a council general for the suppression of such mere absurdities. *Secondly*, there were others, which were altogether inexplicable—such as the questions of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass; a council would be vainly employed in an attempt to throw light on questions only pregnant with interminable disputes. *Thirdly*, the rest were matters of observance, in which the authority of the Pope was already competent; that he could dispense with vows, with the celibacy of the clergy, with the use of meats, of sacred vestments and such like matters; it would be absurd to summon a council to pronounce on subjects already so manifest; and, if the princes required any relaxation on those points, the Pope possessed the power to grant it.

Since then all the questions in dispute were comprehended under these three heads, it was clear that a council could render no service; and that the only remaining expedient for appeasing the troubles of the church was force. The power which had tranquillised Italy and overawed France, would find it an easy task to crush an inconsiderable fraction of Germany, in rebellion alike against the church and the empire. “I beseech you then, he concluded, to consider the interests of posterity. For if the authority of the Holy See shall be

reflection has at length subsided, it seems clear that the course advised by Clement was the better suited to attain *his* purposes; and that a sanguinary aggression upon the reformers, weak and divided as they then were, would have opened the only human hope of restoring the church to the position, in which Luther found it.

The council dispersed, of course, without coming to any resolution; but in these public assemblies the weapons of the ecclesiastical armoury were never half exhausted. Defeated in open warfare, the papal satellites had immediate recourse to the more dangerous hostility of secret intrigue. If there is anything generous or just in feeling or policy, it will generally prevail in public controversy; but the poison of pontifical influence was most safely administered in the dark, and so it proved on this occasion. The Pope had unchangeably resolved not to consent to the proposal of a council: it was therefore necessary to move the Emperor. Then came the trial of his firmness. In the course of a continual communication, during the space of some weeks, spent within the same walls, in the interchange of acts of hospitality and friendship, the Pope represented to his guest, and urged the representations with all the assiduity and address peculiar to the diplomacy of the Vatican: That a council could not be immediately assembled, and that the interval would give great advantage to the heretics; that the love of novelty and independence, and the desire for the ecclesiastical property, would make such additions to their number, in the various states of the empire, as to place them above the power even of the Emperor himself; that councils, under the best circumstances, usually gave rise, through the variety of conflicting interests, to as many dissensions as they healed; that the demand of a council was in fact no better, than an artifice of the heretics to gain time for the con-

summation of their double rebellion against the church and the empire; that, should the council decide against them, they would never want pretexts to elude its decrees; that nothing was so dangerous as to make any concession to revolted subjects; and that the only course, which the Emperor could now take, if he regarded either his honour or his safety, was to enforce the execution of his edicts and assert his authority.

Now there was scarcely one of these positions which was not strictly true; and though the policy propounded by Charles was more long-sighted, as well as far more equitable, than that of the Pope, yet the latter, as I have just remarked, was better calculated to undo the work of the last fifteen years. Not that any such reaction could have been permanent; but this the Pope did not perceive, because he did not understand the principles, ecclesiastical or theological, on which the Reformation rested; and therefore, in a superficial view, his proposal suggested the best or only expedient for the restoration of the church. And, as Charles continually professed that his affection for the church was the foundation of all his policy, his only doubt being as to the best means of serving it, it was perfectly fair and consistent in the Pope to address these arguments to him; nor was it very surprising that he was shaken by them.

To a certain extent he was so. He desisted from his demand for the council; but no force of good or evil argument, no stratagem, no warning, no entreaty, could urge him to the other expedient. Either party was equally determined in his negative resolution—the Pope not to call a council; the Emperor not to employ mere physical force, unless preceded by some very general declaration of public opinion.

They arrived then at this understanding: That the Emperor should, in the first instance, employ all manner

of conciliation for the purpose of re-uniting the Protestants to the church ; and, if that should fail, through their reluctance and perversity, that he should make his final appeal to arms. This compromise, however it might soothe the scruples of Charles, as leaving him still the means to satisfy his debt to justice, was in fact a victory for the Pope ; since it was most probable that the pacific overtures of the Emperor, made, as they were sure to be made, under papal auspices, would be rejected by the reformers : and thus the conclusion, at which matters must speedily arrive, would be exactly that, which was the immediate object of the policy of the Vatican.

The step, which Charles directly took on this resolution, was to call together the States of the Empire, to meet at Augsburg on the 8th of the following April. In his letters of convocation he announced to them, that he summoned the diet for the treatment of the existing religious differences ; that all parties should be heard there with kindness and charity ; that whatever might require correction or reformation on either part should be corrected and reformed—so that, when the truth should be ascertained and concord restored, one pure and spotless faith should unite mankind, and those who were disciples of the common Saviour should compose one common and undivided church.

This order was dated on January 21, 1530. About a month afterwards (February 24), Charles received his crown at the pontifical hands, and sealed, by a false and servile oath, the vain and humiliating ceremony.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DIET OF AUGSBURG.—THE CONFESSION.

The Protestants appear first at the Diet—Luther's remonstrance to the spirituals assembled at Augsburg—he resides at Coburg during the assembly—final attempt of the Landgrave to reconcile the Saxons and Swiss unsuccessful—distinction between Luther's and Melancthon's feelings on this matter—preliminary skirmishes—as to the establishment of Protestant preachers in churches at Augsburg—as to the attendance of the Protestants in the procession of the Holy Sacrament—as to the Elector's presence at mass on the opening of the Diet—manly conduct of the Protestants—address of the Emperor—the Protestants require the public recitation of their Apology, and persist—a hall appointed for the purpose—the Confession read aloud with much effect—deliberation of the Catholics—they decide on a public refutation of it—substance of the Confession of Augsburg—divided into twenty-one articles of exposition of faith, and seven of ecclesiastical abuses—the great moderation with which this work was composed, with a view to conciliation.

THE assembling of the Diet was postponed till the 1st of May, and the prince who first appeared at Augsburg was the Elector of Saxony. In the first instance there had been some scruples among his advisers, as to the policy of compromising his personal safety by attending the Diet, and the Landgrave seems to have shared those apprehensions; but the bolder and wiser counsel prevailed; for it was argued that, as the Emperor would arrive surrounded by all the prejudices of the papacy, and as the only chance of obtaining favour, or even justice, at his hands, was to remove those prejudices, so the only hope of removing them was by a public and manly proclamation of the real principles of the Reformation, and the real objects of the reformers.

In this view preparations had already been made. As soon as the Emperor published the order for the convocation of the Diet and his reasons for convoking it, the Elector instructed the divines of Wittemberg to draw up a formula of confession; and since religious concord was the professed object of the assembly, and since this could scarcely be hoped for, except through mutual compromises, he directed them to distinguish between such articles as must at any cost be maintained, and such as might, if it were necessary, be modified or conceded. In the course of eight days, Luther, with the aid of Jonas, Pomeranus, and Melancthon, composed, in seventeen articles, a summary of his doctrines, and afterwards presented it to the Elector, on the 22nd of March, at Torgau.

Just before the opening of the Diet, Luther published a "Remonstrance to the Spirituals assembled at the Diet of Augsburg." In the course of this composition, besides vindicating his own doctrines, he alleged many scandalous charges against the mass of the hierarchy, which were not the less offensive because they were notoriously true. In a tone of the deepest earnestness, he urged the bishops at length to recognise that truth, which neither fraud nor persecution could resist much longer, though they might succeed in drawing down the vengeance of God upon the heads of His enemies. He cleared his doctrine from some false imputations: That it was adverse to the authority of civil government; that it was new, and in opposition to apostolical antiquity—in respect to which latter calumny he proved, that the real novelty was in the prevailing superstitions, in those modern opinions which had been invented by the scholastics, and those modern rites which were the creation of the monks. He showed, that all these were vain pretences; and that the real cause of enmity to his

doctrine had been disclosed by the canons of Magdeburg, who acknowledged, that it was so far opposed to the interests of the church as it warred against their avarice and gluttony, while the established opinions, which were in fact the novelties, filled their houses with gold. He descended to particular abuses—to that especially of excommunication; he touched on the confiscation of the monastic property; he urged that far more violent invasions of it had been made by those, who were called the friends of the church;* he pleaded the evil purposes to which it had been applied, and the pious uses to which it was now destined; he treated on the communion in both kinds; and in handling the celibacy of the clergy, he took occasion to tax, in the severest expressions, the impurity and hypocrisy of the prelates of the church.

The Elector was attended by a sort of court, or suite, of one hundred and fifty horsemen. The Landgrave arrived ten days afterwards (May 12), with still fewer followers; and their preparation for the spiritual conflict consisted in the attendance of three theologians—Spalatin, Justus Jonas, and Melancthon. Of course the question had been considered whether or not the cause would be assisted by the presence of Luther. The Elector wished it; and Luther himself, though clearly perceiving the danger of the enterprise, was not reluctant. Neither the prince nor he placed implicit trust in the firmness of Melancthon. But it was objected, that the very proposal to bring again before the face of the Emperor the

* He mentioned that the Emperor had very lately confiscated the See of Utrecht, and pensioned off the bishop, whilst no Protestant prince had made any invasion on episcopal property. Nevertheless the work was publicly sold, during the sitting of the Diet, close by the hotel of the Elector, and was cited with approbation by the Bishop of Augsburg in the Assembly of the Princes.

excommunicated object of the Edict of Worms would be offensive, and almost insulting, while the person of the latter would be exposed to a peril which might involve all his friends. So it was prudently decided not to commit him in this struggle, but to remove him to some place of security not far distant, where it might be easy to communicate with him, and receive his instructions. Accordingly he was conducted by the Elector to the fortress of Coburg, situated about half way between Wittemberg and Augsburg. This, like the castle of his former seclusion, was placed among woods on a mountain top, and became in his imagination another holy solitude, the second Patmos of his evangelical and heaven-directed mission.

The Emperor was at Inspruck, where he received with little cordiality the compliments offered to him by the Elector, through his Grand Marshall, Dölzig. Some thought that it would have been wiser, as well as more courteous, had he offered them, as Charles indeed desired, in person; but, placed in the presence of so many bitter foes, it might have been dangerous for him to make any great show of courtesy, or volunteer any condescension, which, if it bordered on humility, would have been ascribed to fear.

At this seasonable moment, while the leading Reformers were at Augsburg and the enemy close at hand, though not yet present, with the hostile feeling of Charles sufficiently ascertained and the Pope of course implacable; while the storm was thus actually impending, the Landgrave made one final effort to reconcile the two grand divisions of the Reformers. A new chance of success seemed to be offered by the absence of Luther, hitherto the most prominent foe of the proposed union. But his spirit burnt with equal ardour among his disciples. Melancthon and Brentz represented by letter

to the Landgrave, that they could never acknowledge as brothers those who persisted obstinately in error; and that by an alliance with the Zwinglians they should expose themselves to all the hatred that attached to the latter,* and thus endanger the success of the Reformation.

The Landgrave replied, according to his broader principles, that a single error, on an obscure question capable of dubious disputation, was a very insufficient reason for exclusion from communion; that the Lutherans and Zwinglians were so intermixed, not in the same states only, nor only in the same cities, but in the same houses and families, that, if the destruction of the one were permitted, the Papists would find it easy to accomplish their real design of extirpating both; that it was a more Christian office to instruct and console their erring friends, than to abandon them to the common enemy, especially before the question had been decided by a council—a council which the Lutherans themselves demanded, and to which they were prepared to submit the determination of their own cause.

It was in vain. Melancthon, though by temper conciliatory almost to weakness, was on this point as inflexible as his master. But there was, perhaps, this difference in their motives. In Luther's mind, mixed up with other feelings, there was doubtless an infusion of honest bigotry, a religious horror of the Sacramentarian doctrine, extending even to the persons of those who held it. While Melancthon, who had never professed any strong opinion on the dogma in dispute, was rather guided by a timid political calculation, built on the hope that he might conciliate the Roman Catholics, the more powerful party,

* "Mihi non videtur (Melancthon writes to Bucer) utile reipublicæ aut tutum meæ conscientiæ *nostros Principes* onerare invidia vestri Dogmatis; quod neque mihi neque aliis persuadere possim, contra Ecclesiæ auctoritatem."

by making a sacrifice of the weaker and more obnoxious section of his own. But Melancthon had yet to learn the character of his papal opponents, if he imagined by any compromise, by any sacrifice, by any humiliation short of absolute submission, to coax or soften them.

Before the commencement of the grand struggle the opposite parties tried their strength, or at least their spirit, in two or three slight but not unimportant encounters. On their arrival at Augsburg the Protestant princes placed their preachers in the pulpits of some of the principal churches. This step was taken on due thought and in full expectation of the Emperor's opposition. The theologians were consulted on the measures to be adopted in that case; and it was agreed, though with some reluctance on the part of the Elector,* that, if the imperial prohibition should be peremptory, and repeated and supported by threats of force, then the preachers, after a respectful protest, should be silenced.

Charles, as it was not difficult to foresee, remonstrated against this bold invasion of the temples of the established orthodoxy, and immediately sent orders from Inspruck, that the offensive sermons should cease. The Elector replied (on the last of May) that it was impossible for him to impose silence on the word of God, or to refuse himself the consolation of hearing it; that, as the Emperor had promised that the profession of the Protestants should be examined, it was essential in the first instance that it should be known—that it might be purified from the calumnies which had stained it, and publicly distinguished from the impious doctrines respecting the Holy

* "Ego respondi cedendum esse voluntati Cæsaris, in cujus urbe sumus hospites; sed noster senex difficilis est." Melancthon to Luther, May 9.

Sacrament, which were maintained by some, and which were beginning to gain ground at Augsburg.

We are informed that those preachers were instructed to abstain from all topics of controversy and irritation ; and thus to make it known to the world that the Protestants were animated by the purest spirit of peace and charity. Yet from the conclusion of the Elector's reply it would appear, that that truly Christian spirit was to be exerted only towards a powerful and menacing foe, while the single difference of a brother reformer, who was breathing on his side nothing but concord and amity, was to be stigmatised as impious and detestable both before God and man.

On the 4th of June Gattinara died at Inspruck. He was a man of sense and moderation, decidedly adverse to the warlike views of the papal party, much indisposed to any violent measures, and possessing great influence over the mind of the Emperor. He died at the crisis when his life would have been the most valuable, and when his counsels might have produced results honourable to the policy of his master and advantageous to the spiritual emancipation of mankind.

On his arrival at Augsburg the Emperor repeated his order for the removal of the preachers. On the part of the Protestants the Margrave of Brandenburg, with some warmth, refused obedience. And it was not till after further negotiations that the matter was thus arranged ; the preachers on both* sides were silenced ; the appointment of others during the session of the Diet was left to the selection of the Emperor ; and he engaged, on his part, to select none but men of moderate opinions and

* It so happened that Faber and Cochläus, two of the most strenuous enemies of the Reformation, were among the number. The inhabitants of Augsburg were for the most part Reformers, and the Bishop himself was not far removed from their opinions.

temper, who should expound the Gospel in its purity. The individuals whom he chose may have been as dull and ignorant as the Elector, in a letter to Luther, has represented them. But it was a point gained by the Protestants, and, at that moment, an important point, that both parties were silenced—this was to place them on a level with their adversaries—to account them, not heretics or schismatics, but, pending the decision of the Diet, equals. That this preliminary dispute was not accommodated till the 17th of June, is besides no slight proof of the firmness of the Protestants.

The day following that of the Emperor's entrance into Augsburg (June 5) was the Festival of the Holy Sacrament. It was well known that the Protestants had discontinued, as superstitious, the ceremonies observed by the church on that solemnity. The opportunity was favourable to embroil them with the Emperor, and it is supposed by some that his papal advisers had been guided by this consideration in regulating his movements. On the evening of his arrival, the Emperor directed his brother to inform the Protestant princes, that he should expect them to appear in the morrow's procession. The same Margrave of Brandenburg replied, as in the affair of the preaching, with the same decision—"I would rather lay down my head before the executioner, than renounce God and his Gospel and give sanction to idolatry." The Emperor, who was present, replied with great mildness, that the question was not one in which the head of any one was concerned. But he was struck with the boldness of the Margrave's speech, and he allowed the Protestants till the morrow to deliberate.

At the appointed time they appeared before him, and expressed the reasons which rendered their obedience in this instance impossible. They pleaded the evangelical

institution of the sacrament, for purposes of spiritual edification, not to be paraded in pompous pageantry about the public places, as an object of adoration to the vulgar. They maintained too that the festival was of recent origin, and that its effect was only to scandalise those who were instructed in the truth; and they deplored the indecent degradation of so holy a rite.

The Margrave urged these and other reasons with so much force and courage that the Emperor changed his tone from that of authority to amicable remonstrance and entreaty. He besought them to pay deference to his orders, and expressed his hopes that he should see them in the procession. But they were not thus tempted to so plain a sacrifice of religious principle.

The opening of the Diet was fixed for the 20th of June, and the occasion was, as usual, to be solemnised by the celebration of mass. Here was another net for the Protestants, and the Emperor caused it to be signified to the Elector that he expected his attendance. The Elector was Grand Marshal of the empire, and in that capacity he was bound to assist his lord on this occasion. Nevertheless, it was his first impulse to refuse. But afterwards, on the representation of his theologians*—that through the necessary obligation of his office he would be exculpated—he yielded. After a formal declaration that he should be present only in the discharge of an official duty, which, while it satisfied his own scruples, would convince the Emperor that he had made no religious concession, he took his place at the ceremony; but this distinction he still preserved, that, while all the

* The arguments of the theologians on this subject seemed weak and sophistical to some of the bolder Reformers; and it was held, that, by lowering religion to the level of civil obedience, they tended to abolish one of the great distinctions on which the Reformation was founded. They are given by Fra Paolo, lib. i. sec. 42.

rest of that large assembly fell down on their knees at the elevation of the host, John alone, together with the Margrave who attended him, remained upright.

These three skirmishes, though followed by no perceptible consequences, are very deserving of the notice of the historian, not only as indicating the resolution with which the Reformers approached the conflict, but as unquestionably productive of some effect on the mind of Charles. He was unacquainted with their principles and their character. It was a new thing for him to be resisted, and resisted by princes and in his presence, on the ground of religious conscience. He was unacquainted with the spirit inspired into the soul by that incentive. The very value, too, that was attached to these secondary matters, proved how well prepared and disciplined were the Lutherans, how resolved to contest every point that was disputable. And it was something gained, that they went through these preludes with honour and not without success.

The legate selected for this critical occasion was Campeggio,* a man of much worldly knowledge, ability and address. There were likewise present two nuncios, Pimpinella and Vergerio. Pimpinella preached the sermon at the opening of the Diet; and by mingling with his imputations on the Reformers and their doctrines some general charges against the whole German nation, he offended not those only, about whose opinion he was in-

* It was for some time doubtful whether the Pope's choice had fallen on Campeggio or Gaetan; and Melancthon, writing to Luther at that moment, said: "*Ego sane Campegius malim, ut virum peritum rerum civilium. Alter est homo ineptus et iucivilius, quo genere hominum nihil est intractabilius.*" In the very following epistle we read: "*Nihil spei ostenditur ex aula Cæsariana; nam Campegius tantum est auctor ut vi opprimamur.*" *Epist. Phil. Melancth. edit. Lond. 1642, Ep. 3 and 4.* The "*vir peritus rerum civilium*" might be a very zealous advocate for persecution, notwithstanding.

different, but some of the more moderate of the papal party. The Cardinal Archbishop of Mayence was one who loudly expressed his dissatisfaction.

The Emperor then caused his own address to be read to the Diet. It turned on two subjects—the war with the Turks, and the religious dissensions. His theme on both was the necessity of union. The former part of his discourse contained nothing worthy of remark; the latter was more hostile to the Protestants than his letters of convocation led them to expect. He deplored the non-execution of the Edict of Worms, and the inefficacy of all subsequent exertions for the same purpose during his absence in Spain. He was now returned to his German dominions to institute a personal investigation, and to attend to the complaints and arguments of all parties, when they should be duly delivered to him in writing.

It was of course obvious that the path for the proposed political confederacy must be prepared by some form of religious reconciliation, and therefore that the first and principal part of the discussions of the Diet would be directed to the latter subject. Accordingly the Emperor commanded the Protestants to deliver to him a summary of their doctrine, and of the ecclesiastical abuses of which they complained, within the space of two days.

The second session of the Diet was held on the 24th. The interval had been employed by the Reformers in reconsidering, with much anxiety and prayer,* the apology which had been previously prepared by Melancthon. And perceiving the Emperor's disposition to conduct the inquiry, as it were, privately, by a mere interchange of

* The morning was passed by the Elector in solitary devotion in his chamber, in the study of the Psalms, in calling on God for assistance and grace, for the aid and honour of His Gospel. He even composed a religious "Gedanke," to the surprise and edification of Melancthon and Dölzig.

written explanations; and being well convinced how essential it was to their success to invest with every possible publicity all their acts, opinions, and declarations, they resolved that, with the Emperor's permission, their manifesto should be read before the assembled Diet.

After a discourse had been delivered by Campeggio, containing nothing worthy of remark, and the Archbishop of Mayence, in the name of the Emperor and the states, had replied, the ambassadors of Austria and the adjoining provinces were introduced, and the discussion turned upon the Turkish invasion. The Protestant princes were in their turn consulted on this subject; and then they rose, and by the mouth of Pontanus, late chancellor of the Elector of Saxony, complained of the various calumnies which had been cast on them, and demanded for their justification the public recitation of their apology. The Emperor desired them to deliver it to the appointed officers, and assured them that it should be duly considered and answered. The Protestants persisted, and pleaded that their honour, their safety and their conscience were concerned in the decision of this matter. On the continued resistance of Charles they urged, that they had no other motive in attending the Diet than this, and that their rank as princes of the empire entitled them to what was no more than a just demand. And when this remonstrance proved as vain as all that had preceded it, they declined, with every expression of decorous respect, to deliver their confession on any other terms.

Some concession became then necessary: and it was determined that the document should be read aloud on the following day before such of the states of the empire as should choose to attend; but that the assembly should not be held in the hall appropriated to the sessions of

the Diet, but in a smaller chamber in the palace occupied by the Emperor.* The object of this arrangement was to exclude all who were not positively members of the Diet, and thus materially to contract the numbers of the audience. But it did not prove a very successful device; for the adjacent chambers were thronged with a crowd of listeners; and the princes and persons of influence, those whom it was most important to undeceive and enlighten on the real origin and principles of the Reformation, were present.

When the preparations were completed, Christopher Beyer, who had succeeded Pontanus in the office of chancellor, rose to read the Confession. And here again a slight demur was raised on the part of the Emperor. There being two copies presented, the one in Latin, the other in German, he was desirous, on the same principle that guided him through all this affair, that the former only should be read; but on the Elector's earnest pleading that its contents would thus be unintelligible to many members present, and that being Germans, assembled in Germany, they claimed the use of their own language, he yielded. Then the chancellor performed his office, with an articulation so clear, distinct and slow, and a voice so loud and sonorous, that he was heard in the inferior court and all the places adjoining.

Profound attention prevailed during the space of two hours thus occupied; and the effect upon the less prejudiced portion of the listeners was such as the Protestants expected. Those, who were acquainted with the new doctrines only through the misrepresentations of the papists, were astonished to find them so moderate; and

* That of the Bishop of Augsburg. The room in which the Confession was read contained about two hundred persons. The Emperor had desired to receive a copy the day before the recital, but this was discreetly refused.

there were doubtless others, who, with the Bishop of Augsburg,* even admitted their truth. "All that we have just heard," exclaimed that prelate, "is pure truth—it is impossible to deny it." And thus the exultation of Luther was not ill-founded, when he insulted the inconsistency of his enemies in this, that after silencing the preachers of his doctrines, they had contributed to their far more effectual promulgation by permitting this public exposition of them.† And so indeed it proved; for though the Emperor expressly prohibited the publication of the Confession, yet very numerous copies and translations of it circulated at the Diet, and were thence transmitted by the ambassadors and deputies of both parties to every quarter of Europe.

When Pontanus placed the copies of the Confession in the hands of the Emperor's secretary, he said, in an au-

* According to Fra Paolo, Cardinal Matteo Lanzi, Archbishop of Salzburg, expressed his public approbation of the reform of the mass and the liberty of meats, and said, that those changes might have been endured, had they not proceeded from a miserable monk. To Cornelio Scopero, secretary of the Emperor, is ascribed the remark, that if the Protestant preachers had money to bestow, they might buy of the Italians whatever religion they preferred; but that they would never succeed without gold. Lib. i. § 42. William Duke of Bavaria immediately expressed to the Elector his satisfaction and surprise at the moderation of his doctrine. Yet the more violent papists showed, by the impatience of their gestures during the recital, that they demanded nothing less than absolute submission.—Cœlestine, History of the Confession of Augsburg, tom. ii. fol. 190.

† In a letter to the Elector of July 9. See also a letter to Cordatus, of July 6 (No. 1246): "Certe instructum est ab adversariis ne Cæsar eam (confessionem) admitteret, neve audiret; publice tamen, coram *vulgo* Imperii legi non potuit—hoc effecerunt. Deinde Cæsaris jussu tradita est et lecta coram toto Imperio, i. e. principibus et statibus imperii. Mihi vehementer placet vixisse in hanc horam, qua Christus per suos tantos confessores in tanto consensu publice est prædicatus confessione plane pulcherrima." Yet was that last epithet, from Luther's pen, intended as very high praise?

dible tone to the prince and to the whole assembly, "With the grace of God, who will defend his own cause, this Confession will triumph over the gates of hell." Charles received the document thus consigned to him, and promised to deliberate on its contents. He did so: and when his advisers were assembled for this purpose, he found them divided by three opinions.* The pure, unleavened churchmen breathed nothing but violence and vengeance—the execution of the Edict of Worms, and the sanguinary chastisement of the heretics. Another section recommended a very different policy—that the confession should be submitted to the consideration of moderate and impartial men, and that the final decision should be formed on their report. A third party advised—what was in appearance a middle course, but in reality was intended to end where the first would have begun—that the Confession should first receive a public refutation, and that the Protestants should then be commanded, and in case of disobedience compelled, to conform to the established doctrines and ceremonies, until a council should decide otherwise.

Contented under this thin veil of justice to disguise the real features of persecution, the majority of the council, conducted by Campeggio, adopted the last proposal. The Emperor consented. The composition of the confutation was assigned to Faber, Eck, Cochläus, and others remarkable for their zeal, and the recitation of it was deferred for six weeks. Meanwhile the papists did not design that this interval should be lost, but determined to devote it to those stratagems of private negotiation, which they so frequently found to succeed after the defeat of their public exertions.

As the Confession of Augsburg is the most celebrated,

* Melancth. Epist. lib. iv. Ep. 9.

if not the most important, document in the history of the Reformation, I have thought proper to publish the first division of it in the Appendix. Still it is necessary to give some account of it in this place, since the knowledge of its substance and of the spirit in which it was composed is essential to the proper understanding of some of the events which distinguish this period. It was prefaced by an extremely judicious address to the Emperor. He was reminded of the objects which he had himself professed in convoking the council—the reconciliation of the two parties, through the exercise of a mutual charity, the interchange of dispassionate arguments, the determination to correct what on either side might be found amiss, for the final attainment of simple truth and Christian concord, and re-union in one church under one master, Christ. The Protestants had obeyed the summons, and presented themselves among the first at the appointed place. At present, also in obedience to the Emperor's commands, they delivered the confession of their evangelical doctrine. They declared their readiness to enter into amicable discussion on any of the controverted points, with the most ardent trust and vows that it might end in concord, and the determination to embrace any means for that purpose, consistent with their conscience. The Emperor had expressed at divers times his wish for a general council, and his determination to urge the Pope to convoke one. "If then we shall fail at this Diet to come to an arrangement on the controverted articles, we offer, with all the respect and obedience that we owe to your majesty, to appear before a general free and Christian council,* and to defend our

* "Hic in omni obedientia nos offerimus ex superabundanti comparituros et causam dicturos in tali generali libero et Christiano concilio. . . ." Now the council specified in the preceding clauses was one to be convoked by the Pope, through the influence and with the co-opera-

cause. From the commencement of your reign, Sire, all the States have agreed in this demand, in all the imperial Diets, with united suffrages. To such a council, as well as to your imperial majesty, we have already made our formal appeal. We still adhere to that appeal; and should we fail on this occasion to come to an understanding with the other party, we solemnly and publicly protest, that we do not intend, that we are not able, to withdraw it, through this or any other proceeding."

The entire exposition consisted of twenty-eight articles. In the first twenty-one was comprehended the profession of faith. The other seven were directed against seven of the most offensive abuses of the Roman Catholic church. The first treated on the unity of the godhead and the trinity of persons. The second, on original sin. The third, on the incarnation and the two natures of Jesus Christ; the atonement made by his death, his descent to hell, his ascension to the right hand of his Father, and his future coming to judge the quick and the dead. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth, it is asserted, that men are not justified before God by their works, or their merits, but through faith; that the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments are the ordinary means by which God communicates the Holy Spirit, which forms that faith, where and when it may seem good to Him, in the hearts of those who hear his word; that this same faith of necessity produces good works, which are expressly enjoined by the commandment of God, and are to be performed in a spirit of obedience to God. In the seventh, that there is one everlasting church, the assembly of the saints; and that its unity consists in unity of doctrine and of

tion of the Emperor. "Ideo significabat se V. C. M. operam daturam ut præfatus Pontifex Maximus una cum V. C. M. tale generale concilium, primo quoque emissis literis publicandum, congregare consentiret. . . ."

the sacraments; and that uniformity in ceremonies and other human institutions is not necessary. In the eighth, that the word and the sacraments do not lose their effect, through the vices of the ministers who may dispense them. In the ninth, that baptism is necessary to salvation, and that infants are to be baptized. The tenth relates to the Eucharist. In the most ancient Latin copies it runs thus: That in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of the Lord are truly present and distributed to those who eat. In the German, as follows: That the true body and true blood of the Lord are indeed present under the species of bread and wine, in the Lord's Supper. In the eleventh, that private confession should be retained in the church, but without insisting on an exact enumeration of the sins committed. In the twelfth, that penitence consists in contrition and in faith, or persuasion that our sins are forgiven, by means of Jesus Christ; and that there is no true repentance without good works, which are its inseparable fruits. In the thirteenth, that the sacraments are not merely signs of the profession of Christianity, but proofs of the love of God towards men, exciting and confirming their faith; and that faith in the promises annexed to them is necessary in those who use them. In the fourteenth, that no one should preach or administer the sacraments of the church, unless duly appointed. In the fifteenth, that the ceremonies of the church should be generally observed; but that they are not to be inculcated as necessary for salvation, or as meriting grace, or as a satisfaction for sins. In the sixteenth, that the authority of magistrates, the laws they enact, the punishments they inflict, the wars they declare, &c. are legitimate. In the seventeenth, that at the end of all things Christ will sit in judgment, and that eternal rewards are prepared for the pious and elect, and eternal punishments

for the wicked. In the eighteenth, that the power of the human will may effect the justice of man, and decide on matters subject to reason ; but that without the Holy Spirit it cannot produce the justice of God, or spiritual justice. In the nineteenth, that God is not the cause of sin, but the will of the devil and of the impious. In the twentieth, that good works are indispensable, but that they cannot merit the remission of sins which is only given through the merits of Christ, and in consideration of that faith which, if it be sincere, must produce good works ; and that they are to be performed, not in any hope of meriting grace by them, but in obedience to the will of God. In the twenty-first, that the merits of the saints may be proposed to the people, as matters for imitation ; but that Scripture nowhere tells us to invoke them, and speaks only of one mediator, priest and intercessor, which is Christ.

Then, after remarking with emphasis on the conformity of their doctrine, not only with Scripture, but with that of the Catholic church and of the Roman church, and the consequent injustice of stigmatising them as heretics, the Protestants proceeded to enumerate the abuses in ceremony and discipline, which they had rejected ; carefully premising that such matters were not essential obstacles to union ; and that, after all, they retained the greater number of the established observances.

The First of these was the retrenchment of the cup, as contrary to the institution of Christ and the practice of the ancient church. The Second was the celibacy of the clergy, as being likewise contrary to the liberty permitted by the gospel. On this subject it was observed, that the present practice had not been established in Germany longer than four centuries, that it had been the cause of great tumults and disorders there ;

and that, from the increasing infirmity of mankind, the time was now arrived for departing from the rigour of the canons.* The Third was the mass. In treating this delicate question they at once repelled the charge of having abolished it;† asserting that they continued to celebrate it with much reverence and with little alteration even in the ceremonies; and that they had abolished nothing, except one scandalous profanation of it—the saying it for money—a practice which had occasioned the desecration of the sacrament, and the dishonour of the clergy. They continued: That the mass had not the virtue of expiating sins, since justification came by faith alone. Private masses they rejected altogether, asserting that they had no claim to any higher antiquity than that of the age of St. Gregory. The Fourth was confession, respecting which they declared, that they rejected nothing more than the enumeration and specification of the sins confessed; and that they retained both the confession itself, and the necessity of ministerial absolution. The Fifth was abstinence from particular meats, which they had abolished, as impressing the people with an erroneous notion of the merit of works; and of the importance of external practices; and occasioning

* Allusion is made in this article to the speech ascribed by Platina to Pope Pius: That there was reason for prohibiting the marriage of the clergy, but much greater for permitting it. “*Et cum seneacente mundo paulatim humana natura fiat imbecillior, convenit prospicere, ne plura vitia serpent in Germaniam. Ipsi canones veterem rigorem interdum posterioribus temporibus propter imbecillitatem hominum laxandum esse dicunt, &c.*”

† “*Falso accusantur ecclesiæ nostræ quod missam aboleant; retinetur enim missa apud nos et summa reverentia celebratur. Servantur et usitate ceremoniæ fere omnes. . . . Ab initio mundi nulla res divina ita videtur unquam ad quæstum collata fuisse, ut missa. Accessit opinio quæ auxit privatas missas in infinitum, videlicet, quod Christus sua passione satisfecerit pro peccato originis, et instituerit missam, in qua fieret oblatio pro quotidianis delictis, mortalibus et venialibus. . . .*”

much anxiety and torture to delicate consciences. The Sixth was monastic vows; and these too they had abolished, as snares to the conscience, as beyond the possibility of observance, and the source of irregularity and crime; condemning at the same time the exaggerated opinion of holiness and perfection, on which they were founded, and of the spiritual advantages which they conferred on those who embraced them. The Seventh was the abuse of ecclesiastical authority—that especially by which it had invaded the limits of the secular power, even the prerogatives of princes. On this subject they asserted, that the power of the keys extended only to spiritual matters, such as the preaching of the gospel, the administration of the sacraments, absolution of sins, not to the disposal of kingdoms, or the abrogation of civil ordinances; that the ecclesiastical ministry was honourable and its authority of divine right, so long as it was confined to purposes of edification, and refrained from imposing upon the faithful the burden of arbitrary observances.

They subjoined, in conclusion, that other abuses might easily have been added, such as those of indulgences, pilgrimages, excommunication, &c.; but that it was their wish to say no more on those subjects than was necessary to manifest the conformity both of their doctrine and ceremonies with the word of God and the Catholic church, and their innocence of having introduced into their churches any novel or impious dogmas.*

* “ Epilogus. Hi sunt præcipui articuli qui videntur habere controversiam. Quamquam enim de pluribus abusibus dici poterat, tamen, ut fugeremus prolixitatem, præcipua complexi sumus, ex quibus cætera facile judicari possunt. Magnæ querelæ fuerunt de indulgentiis, de peregrinationibus, de abusu excommunicationis; parochiæ multipliciter vexabantur per stationarios. Infinitæ contentiones erant pastoribus cum monachis, de jure parochiali, de confessionibus, de sepulturis, de extra-

When we compare the tone of the Confession of Augsburg with the controversial writings, or exegetical treatises, or even private correspondence of the Reformers, we are struck, not only with the moderation of its language, but with the cautious, if not timid, exposition of some of the doctrines contained in it. It is evident, that one great object with its composers was conciliation. They nourished a hope, that by professions of goodwill and general orthodoxy—by proclaiming their adherence to the Church in all essentials—by making it difficult to detect in their creed any indisputable tendency to schism or heresy,—they might at least escape a positive sentence of condemnation. Therefore they took pains to show, that the differences turned on questions not material, matters of ceremony or observance, or discipline, placed for the most part within the dispensing power of the Pope.

To this end they did not expressly reduce the number of the sacraments, while they retained among them confession, absolution, and ordination. They refrained (in the 18th article) from pressing the doctrine of justification to the limits to which Luther carried it. In the fifth, ninth, and other articles they disclaimed the Anabaptists. In the tenth they rejected, though not by name,* the Sacramentaries. Indeed, their doctrine on

ordinariis concionibus et de aliis innumerabilibus rebus. Hujusmodi negotia prætermisimus, ut illa quæ sunt in hac causa præcipua breviter proposita facilius cognosci possent. Neque hic quicquam ad ullius contumeliam dictum aut collectum est. Tantum ea recitata sunt, quæ videbantur necessario dicenda esse, ut intelligi possit, in doctrina et cæremoniis apud nos nihil esse receptum contra Scripturam, aut ecclesiam Catholicam. Quia manifestum est nos diligentissime cavisse ne qua nova et impia dogmata in ecclesias nostras serperent."

* "In cœna Domini docent, quod corpus et sanguis Christi vere adsint et distribuuntur vescentibus in cœna Domini—et improbant secus docentes."—Art. X.

the nature of the elements was so generally expressed, without any disapproval of the Catholic tenet, without any mention of the word transubstantiation, as to leave it at least doubtful whether they had any difference with the church on that most important point. Their article on the abuse of the mass was written in the same spirit. They professed to repudiate certain ceremonies connected with it and also the celebration of private masses, but to retain the substance as held by the church. And therefore, when they came to treat of the sacrifice, which was indeed the essential part, they avoided any express declaration of opinion, and contented themselves with asserting that the sacrament did not possess an efficacy, which no intelligent Roman Catholic was probably prepared to ascribe to it.

As means of conciliating the Pope and his hierarchy such expedients were worse than useless. By them they were sure to be received as proofs of conscious weakness rather than Christian humility—as decent concessions preparatory to absolute submission. It is, however, probable that they were not so much addressed to that intractable faction as to the imperial court, and especially to Charles himself. The dream of the moment was to gain the Emperor. This clearly appears from the correspondence which passed between the theologians at the time, wherein we find that prince, especially in the earlier letters, eulogised, far beyond his deserts, for moderation and impartiality. It appears too from the nature of some of the compromises. Charles had notoriously declared, that there might be objectionable practices in the church of Rome, but that the mass was its very heart, and that he would never allow it to be violated. Hence perhaps their delicacy in treating the mass. In the 16th article they declared their respect for the civil authorities in expressions which would not seem to have

been required from divines and princes. Even that, relating to ecclesiastical authority, was so worded as to seek favour with the secular powers, at the expense of the usurped prerogatives of Rome.*

These remarks, which might be multiplied, are perhaps sufficient to indicate the spirit in which the confession was composed, as well as the object to which its remarkable moderation was directed. Yet, if there was any blame in this, and perhaps there was none, it would not be just to ascribe it to Melancthon alone. Others shared in the composition of the work; it received the approbation of the princes; and Luther himself, though not admiring its soft and low tones, expressed his general satisfaction with it, and allowed it to pass through his hands without any alteration.†

* "*Magnæ disputationes fuerunt de potestate episcoporum, in quibus nonnulli incommode commiscuerunt potestatem ecclesiasticam et potestatem gladii. Et ex hac confusione maxima bella, maximi motus extiterunt, dum pontifices freti potestate clavium non solum novos cultus instituerunt reservatione casuum, violentis excommunicationibus conscientias oneraverunt, sed etiam regna mundi transferre et imperatoribus adimere imperium conati sunt. Hæc vitia multo ante reprehenderunt in Ecclesia homines pii et eruditi. Itaque nostri, ad consolandas conscientias, coacti sunt ostendere discrimen ecclesiasticæ potestatis et potestatis gladii, &c. . .*"

† His words, addressed to the Elector on May 15 (No. 1213), were "*Die gefällt mir fast wohl, und weiss nicht daran zu bessern, noch ändern, wurde sich auch nicht schicken; denn ich so sanft und leise nicht treten kan.*"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DIET OF AUGSBURG.—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Subscription of the Confession—opinion of Melancthon—protest of the Landgrave—difficulty of composing that work—other difficulties of Melancthon as the Diet advanced—extract from his correspondence—confirmed by Camerarius—consolations and remonstrances of Luther—founded in a religious feeling—question as to concession—intrigues of the papal party—Melancthon's letter to Campeggio—principle laid down by Luther—other extracts from his letters—to Hausman, J. Jonas, Melancthon, and the three theologians at Augsburg—remarks—delivery, revision and recitation of the Refutation—sagacity of Luther—appointment of the mediators—their names and insolent demeanour—departure of the Landgrave from the Diet—the negotiations resumed—continued partiality of the mediators—seeming understanding of the Protestant chiefs as to concession—terms to which the theologians were prepared to consent—the princes refuse to acknowledge the authority of the Pope—a committee of fourteen presently reduced to six—they enter into particulars—examine the Confession in detail—their numerous points of agreement—they can come to no understanding on the distribution of the cup, marriage of the clergy, monasteries—discussions on the canon of the mass—Melancthon falters, but Luther at once rejects the papal proposals—the committee is then dissolved.

It was the opinion of Melancthon that the Confession should be subscribed only by the theologians, because they were the persons to whom the regulation of spiritual matters properly belonged; and because such a proceeding would have left the princes uncompromised, and at liberty to employ, as might seem most expedient, their temporal authority.* But this suggestion was wisely overruled; and it was decided to give every possible

* Camerar. De Philippo Melancthonis Ortu Narratio. Lipsiæ, p. 123, et seq.

weight in the eyes of the Christian world to a document, which was intended to proclaim the opinions of the party and was indeed the first public and official manifesto of the Reformation. The landgrave signed it, together with the others, but not without a protest against the tenth article; because it excluded every hope of a coalition with the Sacramentaries, and thus defeated the favourite object of his exertions.

The groundwork of the confession was indeed supplied by Luther in the articles of Torgau. But it is proper to remark, that it was no easy matter to arrange so multifarious a collection of topics, under circumstances so peculiar, with the skill and preciseness exhibited in that composition. During the two or three preceding centuries all theological questions had been so perplexed by scholastic reasonings, as almost to bury the simple doctrine in the sophistries that were thrown over it. Hitherto the Reformers had no acknowledged centre of union—in fact, through their self-asserted freedom of individual opinion, they had taken up notions somewhat different from each other as to their common belief. On the other side, the papists, to a great extent, misunderstood them, and where they understood they misrepresented; so that the composer of this creed was met by impediments of an almost opposite nature. He was bound to exhibit sufficient causes for the discontent of the Reformers, yet to avoid all unnecessary and vexatious grounds of cavil—to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the one party the boldness of Christian liberty, yet to display to the other a spirit of due subordination to the civil authorities—to combine by one creed an independent band, whose religious notions were not very definite, and to do that without breach of peace or communion with an uncompromising enemy. All this Melancthon attempted to perform, and without any model for his

guidance. In after ages it became easier to draw up such compositions; but to prepare the original, and under those circumstances, was a very delicate and anxious office.*

Still this was a simple difficulty and within reach of the clear and guarded understanding of Melancthon. But as the Diet proceeded, and matters became more complicated, his situation involved him in far greater perplexities. He was subject to the insults of the papists, whom he was sincerely desirous to conciliate, and who formed far the more numerous and dignified and powerful party. He was harassed by the suspicions and reproaches of his own colleagues; he had to deal with the princes on one side, with the theologians on another. The most important and difficult negotiations, with a crafty and unyielding adversary, on topics abstruse and indefinite, were placed for the most part in his hands, and the responsibility rested almost entirely with himself. And to contend against all these anxieties he did not possess an inflexible character, nor was he inflamed by that religious enthusiasm which filled the soul of Luther.

Thus, when we examine his correspondence during this period, we perceive the trouble of his soul, which he poured out, in terms of affectionate despondency, into the bosom of his friend and father:—

“Here we are involved in the most wretched distresses, and our tears never cease to flow. And in addition to all this we were this day thrown into wonderful consternation by an epistle of Vitus, in which he signifies that you are so offended with us as not to deign so much as to read our letters. I will not, my father, make any loud expression of my sorrow by words: but I do intreat

* See Gaspar Peucer's “*Epistola Dedicatoria*” to the 4th vol. of Melancthon's Works.

you to consider our situation and the danger that besets us, in which, indeed, there is no consolation, except such as may come to us from you. Day after day there is a confluence of sophists and monks into this place for the purpose of inflaming the Emperor against us. Our friends, those whom we have hitherto called our friends, are absent. Alone and despised we are contending with infinite perils. I beseech you then to have some regard for us, who assuredly are guided by your authority in the most important matters; and at least do not refuse to read our communications and to reply to them, both that you may direct our actions and console our troubles.”*

That this was no exaggerated description of his sorrows and his fears is attested by the account of his friend and panegyrist Camerarius, who was at Augsburg with him: “I myself have observed him, in the midst of such reflections, pouring forth not only sighs but tears. I have seen proof abundant both of his piety and his prudence in the just complaints, as well as in the very serious and wise discourses, which I have heard from his lips. These indeed were displeasing to some who felt greater security, and when communicated to Luther drew from him an epistle, in which he accused Melancthon of timidity; and this was carried about to his disparagement, when it should rather have been converted to his praise. But I know not how it happened, that everything which this man ever said or did was set

* Epist. Phil. Melancth., Londin. 1642, Epist. 9. Others to Vitus Theodorus are extant, to the same effect, and containing almost the same expressions. In two of them he requested Vitus, in case Luther should persist in his refusal to read their letters, to open them and read them to him—“non obsignavi litteras doctoris, ut tu legas et vel invito recites. . . Ipsius auctoritatem sequimur, qui si nos destituit, quid periculi consequatur facile potes judicare. . . . Et stomachatur nulla causa. . . .”

up by malice as a mark for the arrows of calumny and slander.”*

Let us turn to the letters of Luther, and observe what were the expressions which he addressed to his afflicted son in Christ during the perplexity of this crisis. On the 27th of June he wrote as follows: “It is your philosophy, my Philip, which vexes you so, not your theology. . . . I do beseech you, as you are pugnacious enough against others, so struggle manfully against yourself—yourself is your own greatest foe, and it is you who supply Satan with arms against you. . . .” Then, after exhorting him to a religious confidence in the merits and death of Christ, he proceeded: “I, for my part, am not very much disturbed respecting our common cause; nay, I am even in better hope than I thought to be. God has power to raise up the dead; he has power then to support his cause while falling, to restore it when fallen, to advance it while standing upright. If we are not worthy to be His instruments, let the work be done by others; but if we are not to find comfort and courage in his promises, who are there now on earth to whom they more properly pertain?”

Two days afterwards he wrote: “What displeases me in your letter is this, that you describe yourselves as having followed my authority in this affair. I do not choose to be, or to be said to be, your mover (*auctor*) in this cause. If it be not also and equally your cause, I do not at least choose that it should be called mine and be imposed upon you. If the cause is mine alone, I alone will act in it.” Again, on the very following day, he addressed him thus: “In private contests I am the weaker, you the stronger combatant; but in public you are such as I am in private, and I in public such as you

* *Camerarii. De Phil. Melanct. Ortu Narratio. Lipsiæ, p. 124, &c.*

in private, if indeed any struggle can be called private which is carried on betwixt me and Satan. But you despise your own life, while you tremble for the public cause; while I feel very easy and magnanimous about the public cause; because I know for a certainty that it is just and true, that it is the cause of Christ himself and of God, and that there is no consciousness of sin to make it blanch, as I perforce grow pale and tremble, simple and half sanctified as I am. If we fall, Christ will fall with us,* even the Ruler of the world. And let Him fall; I would rather fall with Christ than stand with Cæsar. Neither is it you alone who support this cause. Assuredly I am faithful to you, and present with you in my groans and prayers, and would I were also present in the flesh! . . . But it is in vain that I write thus; because you, following the rules of your philosophy, persist in directing these things by reason, that is, in being rationally mad; and so you wear yourself to death, without perceiving that this cause is placed altogether beyond your reach and counsel, and does not care to be treated by any solicitude of yours. . . .”

These dignified admonitions breathe a very high spirit of religious devotion; and it shines the more when con-

* The following is in the same strain: “*Si nos ecclesia, aut pars ecclesiæ non sumus, ubi est ecclesia? Num duces Baviaræ, Ferdinandus, Papa, Turca et similes sunt ecclesia? Si nos non habemus Verbum Dei, qui sunt qui habent? Si ergo Deus nobiscum, quis contra nos? Peccatores sumus et ingrati—sed non ideo ille mendax erit.*” To Justus Jonas, on July 9, he wrote: “*Christus venit et sedet. . . ad dexteram Dei. Est hoc incredibile magnum. Ego tamen delector in isto incredibili et in eo mori prorsus præsumo. Et quare non etiam in eo viverem? Utinam et Philippus saltem mea fide, si aliam non habet, hoc crederet!—Christ has come, and he sits on the right hand of the Father. This is a great incredibility; yet do I take delight in that incredibility and am eager to die in it. But why should I not live in it likewise? How I wish Melancthon would believe this, at least through my faith, if he have no other.*”

trasted with the desponding tone of Melancthon, and the worldly, though not perhaps personal, apprehensions continually betrayed by him. Still it should not be forgotten how much easier it was to be the spectator of these critical scenes, than to enact the leading character. The wild and lofty solitudes of Coburg were far more favourable to those exclusive spiritual impressions than the crowded halls and courts of Augsburg; and that perpetual contact with the weaknesses and disquietudes of friends,* that unwearied wariness necessary against an ever plotting enemy, would have shaken a firmer resolution than Melancthon's; and had Luther himself been as long exposed to those trials, they would have disturbed his equanimity, though they might not have broken his courage.

The principal cause of the anxiety experienced by Melancthon was contained in this question: What further concessions can be made to conciliate the Roman Catholics, without the compromise of any essential truth, or any violation of conscience? Had it been determined to abide by the confession, which was itself a somewhat timid exposition of the doctrine of the Protestants, there might have been ground for positive fear, but none for perplexity or doubt. Having taken their position deliberately, they must have awaited the result with firmness, and thrown themselves on the good providence of God. But such was not their design. Scarcely was the confession delivered to the Emperor, before the theologians turned their thoughts to examine what part of it might, by possibility, be abandoned.† They addressed a

* Writing to Luther, for instance, in August, he says: "Meanwhile they add the most atrocious menaces. In which matter, though I am not moved by my own danger, yet I do sometimes consider how much imbecility of purpose is betrayed by our chiefs—*quanta sit imbecilitas animi in nostris ἡγέμοσιν.*"

† Melancthon remarks, that, though this subject had been considered

memorial to their princes, recommending them to be prepared for some such sacrifice, to be assiduous in their attention to the Emperor, and to endeavour by private and familiar intercourse to allay his undue fears and soften his prejudices against them.

We do not find that the princes adopted that advice: it would have been unwise in them, as well as unworthy, to do so, since their principles were never in so much danger as when exposed to the seductions of secret and personal intrigue, nor was the enemy ever so inflexible as when he perceived a disposition to concede and conciliate in them. On the other hand, the papists, well knowing the advantages that they might gain by such intercourse, were assiduous in their endeavours to influence both the theologians and their masters. They sought their society; they employed caresses, threats, promises, as might seem most expedient; they turned the political circumstances of the moment to the same object, and endeavoured to shake the constancy of the princes by considerations of temporal interest.* All the resources of papal diplomacy were brought into

before, yet matters are very different in action and deliberation. To Luther, June 26: "*Scripsi tibi, ut mihi significes, si res ita tulerit, quantum cedere adversariis possemus. Res sunt antea deliberatæ, ut scis; sed semper aliter in acie se dant, quam antea sunt deliberatæ. . .*"

* Sleidan relates, that the Emperor refused to the Elector the customary inauguration into his states unless he returned to the bosom of the church; that he threatened to deprive George of Brandenburg of the guardianship of his nephew Albert, except on the same condition; and that he held out to the Landgrave the restoration of his kinsman Ulric Duke of Wirtemberg, and promised his mediation to settle some other dispute. A letter from Melancthon to Luther of July 20 contains this passage: "The princes have been privately solicited to desert the cause. This day they reply, and explain to the Emperor that their religion forbids such treachery." Yet the same Melancthon, in a letter to one John Sillerborner, written about the same time and quoted by Cœlestine, extolled the manners and morals of Charles beyond all bounds, applying to him the *Quo nihil majus meliusve terris Fata donavere*, &c.

action on German ground, in order to win over from their honest purpose a few religious individuals, not devoid indeed of sense and sagacity, though unskilled in the science of negotiation. But in vain. Neither divines nor princes were gained; nor could the papists boast, at the end of the very critical interval which I am about to describe, that they had made a single apostate.

The individual who seems to have been most in danger, and whose desire for reconciliation carried him at times almost to the borders of recantation, was Melancthon himself. Being decidedly at the head of the evangelical theologians at Augsburg, he was of course regarded with especial attention by the opposite party. The notorious moderation of his temper gave them hopes that his principles might prove equally flexible. Nay, his great talents and extensive learning, recommended by a characteristic modesty, won for him the disinterested esteem of many distinguished churchmen, and introduced him to their society. Secret conferences were opened between him and persons deputed by the papists, with the consent of the Elector and the other princes. Two of the least violent of that party, Hermann, provost of the chapter of Cologne, and Erhard of March, bishop of Liege, were in the first instance commissioned to negotiate with him. We find him likewise in correspondence with Cochläus, the most intemperate of all his adversaries; and there is extant a very remarkable letter,*

* It is published by Cœlestine, tom. iii. fol. 18. The Venetian ambassador obtained a copy of it, and sent it to the Senate; so that it soon became notorious. Seckendorf (l. ii. s. 33, § 71) expresses a very faint and perfectly unfounded doubt respecting its authenticity, followed by —aut si fecerit, ut lapsus humanum excusare decet. Any doubts that might be raised on that subject are removed by Beausobre, tom. iv. Liv. viii.

which he addressed, on the 6th of July, to Campeggio himself.

In this document, which even his most partial admirers scarcely affect to excuse, he ventured to declare, that the Protestants were prepared to refuse no conditions on which peace might be granted them. "We profess no doctrine different from the church of Rome; we have even repressed many persons, who would have sown pernicious tenets. . . . We are disposed to give obedience to the Church, if only, in accordance with that peculiar clemency which it has always practised towards all men, it will dissemble or relax on a very few points, which, even if we wished it, we could not now alter. . . . Give no credit to our slanderers, who maliciously corrupt our writings, and impute to us whatever seems better calculated to inflame the public hatred against us. . . . We will obey and reverence the authority of the Roman pontiff and the whole ecclesiastical polity, if only the Roman pontiff will not reject us. . . . Since the concord can now be effectually established, if your equity on the one part will in some few matters close your eyes, and if we on the other shall restore you a sincere and faithful obedience. Then why reject your suppliants?—why persecute them by fire and sword? . . . There is no account, on which we have to endure so much odium in Germany, as our firm defence of the Roman doctrine. And this fidelity to Christ and to the Roman church, by God's will, we will continue to nourish even to our latest breath. . . . A slight dissimilitude in our rites appears to be the only obstacle to concord. And the canons themselves affirm, that such dissimilitude does not dissolve the unity of the Church."*

* Pallavicino, who carefully records this letter (on the authority dell' Eretico Celestino) remarks, that Melancthon, who was the head of his

It does not appear whether this composition of Melancthon received the approbation of the princes, or whether he may not in this instance have exceeded the general commission, which they unquestionably gave him. When we refer to the letters written by Luther at that time, and in reference to that subject, we certainly find in them not a violent, yet not so humble a spirit. Melancthon had previously inquired of him, to what extent concessions might be made to the enemy. In his reply (dated June 29, and already cited), he showed a decided reluctance to make himself responsible for any concessions which might seem expedient to others—"if the cause be mine alone (he said), let me be the sole agent." But in general terms he consented to the compromise of everything, except the Gospel. Yet was this so vague a declaration, as to afford very little light to his colleague, to guide him through the intricacies of a minute and detailed controversy, bearing the name of negotiation.

On the 6th of July he expressed to Nicholas Hausman some hopes from the moderation of certain influential individuals in the opposite party: "Many bishops are inclined to peace and despise the sophists, Faber and Eck.

party, was of a disposition rather perverted than perverse, and by nature as desirous of peace as Luther was of contention—a suspicious compliment from an uncompromising enemy. Lib. iii. cap. iv. The following are some of the expressions: "Ego igitur duxi ad R. D. T. scribendum esse, ut et nos intelligeret unice cupidos esse pacis atque concordie, *nec detrectare ullam faciundæ pacis conditionem*. Dogma nullum habemus diversum a Romana Ecclesia. . . . Parati sumus obedire Romanæ Ecclesiæ, modo ut illa pro sua clementia, qua semper erga omnes homines usa est, pauca quædam vel dissimulet, vel relaxet, quæ jam ne quidem si velimus mutare queamus. . . . Adhæc Romani pontificis auctoritatem et universam politiam ecclesiasticam reverenter colimus. . . . Hanc fidem Christo et Romanæ Ecclesiæ ad extremum spiritum Deo volente præstabimus." Cœlestin. loc. cit.

The Elector of Mayence" (to whom he addressed a long hortatory letter on the same day,) "is pronounced to be very desirous of concord. The Emperor treats our prince not only kindly, but almost reverently." But his distrusts, his uncertainties were much more strongly expressed in several other epistles written during the same month. "It is impossible," he said on the 9th to Justus Jonas, "that we should ever come to any agreement respecting doctrines . . . but what I could wish, and am almost disposed even to hope, is this : that our doctrinal dissensions may be suspended, and we may attain a political concord." To Melancthon, on the 13th—"I think that you must by this time have had enough and more than enough of experience not to see, that Belial can by no devices be reconciled to Christ, and that there is not any hope of concord from a council, so far as doctrine is concerned. I have written this to our prince. . . . Assuredly I for my part will neither yield, nor suffer to be restored so much as a hair's breadth. I will rather endure every extremity. Let the Emperor do all he can. . . . However, since those treacherous devils do so trifle with us by their promise of a council, I would so far trifle, along with them, as to appeal from their threats to that nothing and never-to-be council, that in the mean time we may have peace. I see no reason yet to fear violence from them." To Justus Jonas he wrote, on the same day : "Who does not see that the Emperor has no decided course in this matter, but is only carried and driven about. But if you will stand firm and yield nothing, you will oblige them to take some other policy. Our cause has less to fear from force and menaces, than from those satanical artifices, which I have always feared more than anything." And to Spalatin : "I believe the Emperor's clemency to be great. . . . but I have no hope that he will prove

favourable to our cause, howsoever he may wish it ; for what is one man against so many demons ?”

On the 15th he addressed a somewhat more formal epistle to the three theologians, together with Agricola, and herein he recommended them to leave the Diet, contented with what they had obtained : “ *I absolve you*, in the name of the Lord, from that assembly. Immer wider heim, immer heim ! Hope not for concord—hope not for toleration—but only that they may permit you to teach in your own way, and grant you peace, remaining themselves in their own impiety. . . . If the Emperor shall choose to publish an edict, let him publish it ; he has published one at Worms. Let us obey the Emperor as Emperor—nothing more, or farther. Heim, heim ! May the Lord Jesus preserve and console you ! . . . ” At this crisis he expressed, in three several letters (to Spalatin, Melancthon, and Justus Jonas), his great sorrow that he could not be present at Augsburg—“ I am extremely vexed and indignant that I cannot be with you bodily ; and, were it not a temptation of God to throw myself into so many dangers, you would certainly have already seen me among you.”

On the 21st he thus wrote to Justus Jonas : “ I am delighted that Philip is beginning to find out by experience the characters of Campeggio and the Italians. That philosophy of his believes nothing except from experience. I for my part would not trust a single *My* either to the Emperor’s confessor, or to any other Italian. For my friend Gaetan was so fond of me, that he was ready to shed blood for me—to wit my own blood. Es sind Buben. An Italian, when he is good, is of all men the best ; but such is a prodigy as rare as a black swan. . . . I could wish to be the victim of this council, as Huss was the victim of that of Constance, which was the latest papal triumph.”

Thus much appears from these letters : That Luther was not a party to the epistle of Melancthon ; that he at least was so far from perceiving no doctrinal difference between the parties, as to think the differences irreconcilable ; that he was in general adverse to the tampering conciliatory policy then in operation at Augsburg ; that he would boldly have broken off the negotiations as they then stood ; and that he had little fear of the consequences. And such was the ground most worthy of the champion and principles of the Reformation.

In such negotiations and correspondence was spent the interval between the reading of the confession and of the document composed in reply to it. The Emperor, being indeed informed that the works of Luther contained many strong denunciations and some offensive dogmas, to which no allusion was made in the official manifesto, required the princes to inform him whether they had any additions to make to their confession. They referred the question to the theologians ; and these discreetly replied, that for the present they wished to adhere to the confession ; that there were indeed other matters, objectionable but not essential, which might be kept in reserve, to be advanced, or not, in the course of the future deliberations, as expediency might require ; and that a clause should be inserted in the confession to that effect. Such was the answer returned by the princes to the Emperor : they admitted that for the advancement of concord they had suppressed their reprobation of some abuses, but they protested against their silence being interpreted as an approval of them.

The Roman Catholic theologians delivered their reply to the Emperor on the 13th of July ; but on examination he found it so violent, as to make it necessary to return it to them, with some expression of displeasure and a command to correct its asperity. It is not known what

were the alterations introduced, but, the document being at length so modified as to represent both his doctrines and his spirit, he caused it to be read in full Diet on the 3rd of August; having previously invited the Protestant princes to accede to it, out of deference to his authority, as protector of the integrity of the Church and the religious unity of the empire.* In the conclusion, after an invective against Luther, it was admitted, that many abuses had crept into the Church, and that the Emperor by no means defended them; and then were repeated the old customary promises of self-reformation.

Luther had long foreseen this policy; and a letter to Agricola,† written on the 30th of June, gives evidence of his sagacity: "The hopes which are built on the clemency of the Emperor are nothing. My opinion is this: the High Priests have induced him to examine the cause, and when they shall have heard our apology, they will come to what decision they choose. At the same time they will hold forth the pretence, that they have given us a sufficient hearing, and thus will cast on us the false charge of pertinacity the more boldly and speciously, because, after being heard and admonished, we have still refused obedience to the Emperor."

* Melancthon (which is strange) was not present at the reading—ego non interfui—but he thus announced the event to Luther: "Tandem audivimus confutationem 3^o Augusti, et sententium Cæsaris, quæ satis aspera est. Nam priusquam legeretur Confutatio, Cæsar inquit, se in ea sententia quam ibi prescribi curasset mansurum esse et petere ut idem faciant principes nostri: quod si nolint facere, se, cum sit defensor ecclesiæ, nullum schisma in Germania tolerare. Hæc fuit orationis summa; quæ quanquam esset atrox, tamen cum confutatio esset valde pueriliter scripta, miræ gratulatio secuta est lectionem. Nullus Fabri liber extat tam ineptus, quo non sit ineptior hæc confutatio." *Epist. Phil. Melancthonis. Ep. 12.*

† No. 1238, Edit. De Wette.

The Refutation was not published, and even copies of it, when requested by the Protestants, were at the time refused. But those of them who heard it were filled with confidence in their own opinions, seeing how feeble were the arguments, which, after such elaborate preparation, were urged against them ; besides, the very fear of publicity, so strongly evinced by their adversaries, gave them new and just grounds of satisfaction and assurance.*

Two days afterwards (August 5), on another interview with the Emperor, as the Protestants persisted in demanding unconditionally a copy of the Refutation, and he in refusing it, and as he began to be irritated by their firmness, the Electors of Mayence and Brandenburg interposed, and requested him to accept their offices for the peaceful arrangement of the differences. Thus the affair was placed on different ground. No longer conducted by direct intercourse between the chiefs of the opposite parties in open Diet, it was reduced to a matter of private and amicable negotiation.

On the following day the mediators were appointed, and among them, as if at once to stifle every hope of impartiality, were some of the most violent enemies of the Reformation. They were six in number—the Elector of Brandenburg, the Archbishop of Saltzburg, the Bishops of Strasburg, Wurtzburg, and Bamberg, and Duke George of Saxony. On their appointment they received some wholesome counsel from the Bishop of Augsburg

* The Roman Catholics justified the refusal by such reasons as these : That the Legate would have sacrificed the dignity of the See by putting it on a level with the rebels ; that many paltry and equivocating answers to particular parts of the Refutation would have been devised and published and obtained credit with the people ; so that disrepute would have been thrown upon the whole document and upon the church whence it proceeded. See Pallavicino, lib. iii. cap. iii.

as well as from the Archbishop of Mayence; but the admonitions of the former, pointing to the love of truth and the exercise of justice, produced only a personal dispute with the Archbishop of Saltzburg and the Elector of Brandenburg; and those of the Archbishop were lost upon understandings already prejudiced, and passions already inflamed by party and professional animosity.

On the 7th of August they held their first meeting with the Protestants. On this occasion they repeated the oft contested arguments respecting the authority, splendour, extent, antiquity of the church, and enforced them, after the fashion of that church, by insults and menaces. These last were directed against the Elector; he was assured by one of the princes that not his crown only, but his life too was at stake; and that the Emperor was prepared to proceed to the last extremities against his subjects as well as himself, unless they should repent and return to the faith of their forefathers. The Prince, though mortified by the outrage, and even for the moment appalled by the intimation, presently recovered his wonted resolution.

Meanwhile the Landgrave, when he had heard the Refutation and perceived the spirit of the Emperor, and when, on the interference of the Elector of Mayence, he saw the new and dangerous channel into which the dispute was to be turned, thought that the moment to follow the advice of Luther, at once to quit the Diet and withdraw to his "home." Accordingly he requested the Emperor's permission to depart, pleading the sickness of his wife. Receiving no immediate reply, he feigned as though he purposed to remain, and made a show of preparation for an approaching tournament. But on the 7th of August, after witnessing, in the insolence of the "Mediators" towards a brother prince and reformer, an indication of the temper in which their intervention was

to be conducted, he took his measures immediately. He retired from the city during the night by a private gate, without any further communication with Charles, and returned to his dominions. He had signified his intention to no one, and left behind him only a note to the Elector assuring him of his unalterable constancy in the cause of the Gospel, and his determination rather to shed the last drop of his blood than abandon it. His ministers remained at the Diet, instructed to give their vigorous support to the Protestant cause.

This decided proceeding excited, not only the indignation of the Emperor, but also his fears lest the bold example should be followed. He immediately sent for the rest of the party; he addressed them with great courtesy, and offered all his exertions for the restoration of their union with the church. They, on their side, after excusing the departure of the Landgrave, engaged to remain at Augsburg till the termination of the Diet. And when some dissatisfaction expressed by the Protestants, at some unusual disposition of the imperial soldiers, had been removed, the negotiations were resumed.

At the next meeting, on the 9th of August, they presented their reply to the arguments urged against them at that preceding. They pleaded, as on so many other occasions, the truly evangelical character of their faith, and their readiness to renounce any article which should be proved unscriptural; they exclaimed against the cowardice and absurdity of condemning them on the mere reading of a refutation, a copy of which had not been so much as communicated to them; they repeated their demand of the council so long held out to them; they besought the mediators at least to abstain from menaces, as being a departure from their pacific office; and promised on their parts to make every concession which should be consistent with piety and conscience.

This answer was signed by the same names which were subscribed to the Confession, with the addition of Nuremberg and Reutlingen and four other cities of less consequence, which deserved, however, the greater glory, through that very weakness, for so bold a step taken at so dangerous a crisis.*

In reply to this the mediators urged at their next meeting, on the 11th, That the Protestants had been sufficiently heard by the public recital of their Confession; that to communicate the Refutation would only be to invite a dispute on points of faith, which the Emperor had expressly forbidden, under the heaviest penalty; that the Refutation, if published, would be liable to the same insults which had been heaped upon the Edict of Worms; that pleas of conscience came with an ill grace from men, who had permitted the church and the Word of God to be outraged by their preachers, to the overthrow of all ecclesiastical discipline, and who were already divided into so many sects of Iconomachs, Sacramentaries, Anabaptists, Feasting Brothers; that councils were vain expedients for the correction of persons who denied the infallibility of councils; and that they had no alternative but to return to the bosom of the church; yet, if they could allege anything in their defence with the slightest show of justice, that the mediators would refer it to the Emperor—if not, that they would signify at once the decision to which they had come.

The above are, of course, very meagre abridgments of very long discourses; but they are sufficient to indicate the points on which the argument turned; and this is as much, perhaps, as is at all important to the general purposes of history.

The Princes perceived from this answer, that the

* Seckend. l. ii. sect. 30, § 67.

mediators were in fact nothing more than the organs of despotism, and that no sort of compromise was to be expected from them. It being thus evident that all advances to that end must be made by themselves, they proceeded to deliberate with their theologians as to the extent to which concession might conscientiously be carried; for this appeared to them the moment for making it. Not that this was the first occasion on which that subject had been discussed. Even before the meeting of the Diet, consultations had been held, with a view to understanding, what were the articles to which, under every circumstance, it was indispensable to adhere—what were those, which, in case of extremities, it might be expedient to abandon. These steps had not been taken without the knowledge of Luther, though it is clear, even from the short abstracts which have been given from his letters, that he was suspicious of the meditated compromises, if not altogether adverse to them.

The understanding at which the Protestant chiefs, ecclesiastic and secular, arrived, was seemingly this: That whatever was not in itself matter of doctrine, or involving any important doctrine, might be conceded; and as the theologians had been very desirous to establish, in the Confession and the recent deliberations on it, that there was no doctrinal difference between themselves and the church, it might appear to them that there was no obstacle in the way of reconciliation. If there existed no essential difference, and if they were prepared to yield all non-essentials, perfect concord might seem on the point of being restored. But in this dream they had not well calculated the character of their enemy, nor indeed did they perceive in how many different manners their own general principle might be interpreted, even by the members of their own party. The limit between what is essential and what is otherwise

was then so vague and indistinct, that scarcely any two among themselves would have agreed perfectly on that subject.

The particular propositions to which Melancthon and the other theologians were prepared, on these principles, to consent, as the terms of concord and perpetual re-union with the church, were the following: That the jurisdiction of the bishops should be restored; that the authority of the Pope should be acknowledged;* that he, on his part, should permit them the liberty of preaching the Gospel, and the lawful administration of the Sacraments; that he should grant them the communion in both kinds, seeing that they condemned not those who communicated in one only, and confessed that the body of Jesus Christ, together with his blood, existed under the single species of bread; that he should allow marriage to the clergy; and that he should confirm, or at least not dissolve those, whether of priests or of monks, which had already taken place. In respect to the mass, the difference in the manner of its celebration was so insignificant, that if the above conditions should be ratified, there would remain no difficulty on that subject; and as to the distinction of meats, and such like observances, any dissension would be obviated as soon as the bishops should be restored to their authority.†

* They argued: "*Periculosum esse veterem consuetudinem sine gravibus et magnis causis convellere et abrogare; et licet Pontifex sit Anti-Christus, tamen sub eo (sicut Israelitas sub Pharaone) vivi posse, dummodo sinceram de Deo doctrinam et verum sacramentorum usum non oppugnet.*"—Ap. Seckendorf, lib. ii. sect. 30, § 67.

† Together with his celebrated letter, Melancthon sent to Campeggio nine "Conditions of Concord,"—the same, or very nearly the same, in substance with those in the text. Cœlestine mentions that Campeggio immediately submitted them to his theologians; and that Cochläeus, so far from accepting them, instantly applied his talents to confute them. This composition is extant.—Cœlest. tom. iii. fol. 18. There is also a

Such a project of reformation was indeed a very suitable illustration of Melancthon's letter to Campeggio; and it perfectly explained his meaning, and evinced the sincerity with which he said that the Protestants were not prepared to refuse any conditions which might be offered to them.

The princes, however, were not disposed so implicitly to obey their divines as to descend at once to this humiliation. Pontanus annexed a marginal remark to their paper: "That it was impossible to acknowledge the authority of the Pope, who claimed a divine right and was in truth no other than the Antichrist predicted by St. Paul, and now revealed." Bolder counsels prevailed; and whatever may have been the resolutions secretly taken, the proposal which they offered in their public reply to the mediators—a document of considerable weight and dignity, delivered on the 13th of August—was confined in effect to this: They tendered obedience to the bishops so far as the Word of God might permit them; they repeated, with energy, their demand of a council, of which the decisions should be conclusive of the controversy; and, perceiving that the present method of discussion could not possibly lead to any friendly result, they suggested that the Emperor should appoint a committee, from members of both parties, for the further examination of the subjects in dispute. He consented. The commission of the mediators thus ended; and it was succeeded by another, a somewhat different, but scarcely more auspicious, instrument of pacification.

On the day following, the Emperor appointed the committee. It consisted of fourteen persons—seven of each party—of whom four were princes, four lawyers,

letter of Melancthon to the secretary of Campeggio, of August 5, written in the same abject strain: "*Si quid hæreret in ecclesiis incommodi, paulatim Episcoporum diligentia corrigi posset, &c. &c. . .*"

and six theologians. The princes on the one side were John Frederic, son of the Elector, and the Margrave of Brandenburg; on the other the Bishop of Augsburg, and George of Saxony;* the lawyers for the Protestants, Pontanus and Heller; for the Catholics, Bernard of Hagen and Vehe; the theologians, Melancthon, Schepf, and Brentz; Eck, Wimpina, and Cochläus. Of the Catholic party, the Bishop of Augsburg and Vehe were remarkable for the moderation of their opinions.

The deliberations began on the 16th; and, after some days of fruitless discussion, it was supposed that the chance of concord would be increased, if the number of the committee were reduced. Accordingly the four princes and four of the theologians were withdrawn, and the new body consisted of six members, of whom one only was an ecclesiastic—Eck, Melancthon, and the four lawyers. Thus the consultations were continued (on August 24), but with no better success than those which preceded them. I shall not enter at any length into the particulars of these debates, nor present in any detail either the opinions advanced or the arguments by which they were supported. A new method of deliberation was now opened. With the Emperor and the mediators the discussions had been general: they had scarcely proceeded beyond the vague assertion of certain general principles and general professions, directed to the broadest view of the affair as a whole, and descending very little to particular points of controversy; but the reverse was now the manner of proceeding. The committee entered into a separate examination of every article in the Confession, and undertook to ascertain the real meaning of dubious expressions, as applied to the actual state of

* Henry, Duke of Brunswick, was the prince appointed; but, as he had been sent on a special mission to the Landgrave, George of Saxony acted for him.

opinions and circumstances. This was of course a far more difficult and tedious office, requiring the exercise of more tact and ingenuity, as well as much more patience.

The twenty-one articles of the Confession were examined first. On fifteen of these the committee came to an entire, on three more (12, 20, and 21) to a partial, agreement;* and to make a show of perfect unanimity on matters of doctrine, they referred the other three (11, 14, and 15), on which they did not at all agree, to the second chapter of the Apology. This was supposed to treat of matters not essential, whereon concession might be made on either side, without the compromise of any Scriptural truth. This arrangement was certainly concluded in the spirit of conciliation; and we may observe that the same spirit was particularly shown in the handling of the tenth article, which was so worded by the one party as to convey, by plausible interpretation, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and was tacitly inter-

* Among these was the doctrine of justification by faith, with certain explanations. This was considered as a great triumph for the reformers: that they had extorted from the adversary the essential doctrine on which the whole of their work was built. But it has often been remarked that the Roman Church was seldom pertinacious on mere points of abstract doctrine, provided they could keep externals undisturbed; nor perhaps was its doctrine on this point ever very positive. It is true that some profitable practices were founded on the meritoriousness of works; yet to preserve the practices it might be sometimes convenient to "explain" the theory, or even to allow a sort of liberty of private opinion, provided it led to no overt act of independence. However, it is curious, that while Camerarius, on the one side, boasts of the triumph of the Protestants on this article, Pallavicino, on the other, exults in their concessions, and even instances the following:—"That we are not justified by faith *alone*, but by faith and grace; that it is necessary to perform the good works commanded by God; that in this life, not only the elect, but the reprobate, are contained in the church; that man possesses free will, though he cannot obtain justification without divine grace."—Lib. iii. cap. iv.

puted by the other in that sense; and thus it passed without dispute or question among the points of concord. Then they proceeded to the discussion of "the abuses," whither the whole difficulty of the arrangement was now removed.

Even here were three questions on which they arrived at a real or apparent agreement—confession, abstinence from meats and other observances, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction,* which of course included the power of excommunication; for though the Catholics did not expressly consent to the restrictions imposed by the Confession upon the first and third of these, nor approve the principle on which the liberty was claimed in respect to the second, yet, in belief that the restoration of the ecclesiastical authority would gradually lead to the restoration of usages for the most part dependent on it, they would probably have waived their objections on these points; but on others, of much more importance, the parties could not attain even the shadow of unanimity.

On the retrenchment of the cup, the Catholics required from the others an express admission that it was indifferent whether the communion was administered under both species or under one only, so that it might

* "Nos (said Melancthon on August 22) moderatissimas condiciones proponimus. Reddimus obedientiam episcopis et jurisdictionem; et communes cæremonias pollicemur nos esse instauraturos."—Epist. 15. In the same letter he expressed his wonder at the rashness of the adversaries, who seemed to apprehend nothing to themselves from having recourse to arms. But even Camerarius admits that, in the reduced committee, when the whole burden fell on Melancthon, he showed some symptoms of wavering and weakness. We may mention, on the same authority (De Phil. Melancth. Ortu, &c. p. 140), that he was extremely terrified by a comet, or some other heavenly phenomenon, which appeared at this time.

be thus *given*, as well as taken, without sin;* and this was refused. On the celibacy of the clergy, they offered to tolerate those already married till the decision of a council, but on two conditions: that they should request the dispensation of the Pope; and that none should marry in future, on the penalty of deprivation. The Protestants rejected both these conditions. In regard to monastic vows, the Protestants consented that the monasteries still existing in their states should remain undisturbed, in enjoyment of their revenues and in observance of their rules; but they insisted that any individuals wishing to abandon the profession should have that permission; and also that the property of the monasteries already abolished should remain at the disposal of the civil authorities, for the maintenance of the poor, the support of churches and schools, and other pious purposes. To these stipulations the Catholics refused their assent.

But the canon of the mass was the question which led to the most difficult discussions. The Catholics demanded its entire restoration; and to delude their opponents into this concession, they entered into consideration of the doctrine, and were at great pains to explain in what sense the mass was a sacrifice, and in what sense it was not—that it was not a positive and literal sacrifice, but one mystical and figurative†—not a meri-

* “*Nos excusavimus sumentes; de porrigentibus hæret res. . . . Tuam igitur sententiam audire volumus.*”—Melancthon to Luther. The Council of Basle had conceded the whole to the Bohemians, on the understanding now demanded by the Roman Catholics.

† “*Est ergo missa non revera victima, sed mysterialis et representativa. . . .*”—*Cœlest. tom. iii p. 45.* Luther wrote thus to Hausman on September 23: “In the former negotiation, the adversaries required that we should admit private masses; that we should retain both canons, with a convenient gloss, by which the sacrifice should be interpreted as a

torious sacrifice conferring justification—a work having of itself the power of reconciliation to God—but one simply Eucharistical, a sacrifice of commemoration and thanksgiving, yet still a sacrifice, and by consequence (though they did not openly press the consequence) a propitiation for sin; and if for sin, for the sins of the dead as well as of the living. Thus by this artful doctrinal concession, which was afterwards repudiated by the Council of Trent, they would have seduced the Protestants into the restoration of that which they valued far more than the doctrine—the practice; and this, not more perhaps through love of the mere lucrative profits, which were swept away by the abolition of private masses and the substitution of a more spiritual system, than for the sake of an apparent triumph, on the most important ground, which would have levelled the most conspicuous bulwark of the Reformation. For the alteration in the service of the mass, if not the boldest measure of the Saxon reformers, was certainly the most tangible of their changes; it was the strongest mark of distinction between themselves and the church; it was especially the badge or banner of the Reformation, insomuch that, were it abandoned to the enemy, all persons of both parties, even the least instructed in arguments and principles, would immediately both see and feel the humiliation of the act, while very few would care to enter into the abstruse question on the *nature* of the sacrifice, or appreciate the spiritual concession by which the papists had bought their victory.

commemorative representative sacrifice; that we should declare it free to communicate in one or in both kinds; that we should separate married monks and priests from their wives. On these terms they offered to permit both kinds in the Sacrament, and to tolerate the above marriages, on account of the children born in them, till a council—just as brothels are tolerated. . . . Our party did not consent to these conditions, &c.”

Nevertheless Melancthon faltered ; at least so we may judge from the approving terms in which he wrote of the proffered interpretation of the doctrine of the sacrifice ; still it seems probable that he would not have yielded the point.* But Luther, whom he consulted, took a much more decided view of the question. He refused at once to restore the mass at any price ; he would listen to no compromise on this matter ; and he argued, with his wonted sagacity, that the interpretation proposed by the Roman Catholics, though in speculation it might seem innocent, would prove a deadly superstition in practice.†

Matters becoming thus hopeless, after much long and tedious negotiation, Melancthon received orders to make no further concession ; and then, after the reformers had repeated their offers, and urged once more the very moderate conditions on which they were prepared to return to the church, they required, should these be finally rejected, that all religious affairs should remain on their present footing till the decision of a general council ; and that both parties should proceed forthwith to treat on the best means of preserving at least a political unity. Thus terminated (on August 31) the exertions of the committees of reconciliation—with this result only, that they had ascertained the particular impediments that prevented the re-union, and at the same time discovered how hard, if not impossible, it would be to remove them. The controversy was then restored to

* Seckendorf (lib. iv. sect. 33, § 73) quotes a letter on the subject to the Margrave of Brandenburg.

† Luther wrote a very decided letter to the Elector on this matter on the 26th of August (No. 1287), arguing that no concession must be made either in respect to private masses or the canon of the mass, nor any interpretations of the latter accepted. The princes, no less than their theologians, were in fear and perplexity at this moment.

the place where it stood before this vain experiment was tried, and devolved once more into the hands of the Emperor.*

* “Ante triduum (writes Melancthon to Luther on September 1) finitum est colloquium nostrum. Nolumus enim conditiones de altera Sacramenti parte, de canone, de missa privata accipere, item de cœlibatu. Nunc igitur res ad imperatorem relata est.” Cœlestine dates the final close of the sessions of the committee on the last of August. Let us subjoin Melancthon’s own account of this negotiation in his own words. Thus he wrote at the moment to John Hesse, canon of Breslau:—“Ego paucis significabo quid in colloquio cum Eccio egerimus. . . . De justitia fidei concedebat nobis, quod fides justificet, sed cavillabatur vocem *sola*: usque tamen addi voluit opera, sed gratiam et Sacramenta et verba tanquam instrumenta. Hæc ego concessi posse addi; sed opera tamen exclusi. Postea de satisfactione pro pœnæ remissione. Item de meritis, etsi his exiguum quiddam, seu ut ipse loquitur minus principale tribuit, tamen nihil concessi. Reliquos articulos non improbant adversarii. Ubi ventum est ad utramque speciem, voluerunt ut et hoc diceremus licere uti una specie. Hic excusavimus sumentes . . . sed auctores prohibitionis utriusque speciei non excusavimus. De conjugio iniquissimas conditiones proposuerunt. Itaque non recepimus. Recusavimus etiam missas privatas restituere. Cæterum Epp. obtulimus jurisdictionem et palam professi sumus, nos politiam ecclesiasticam libenter conservaturos esse, et optare ut Epp. præsint ecclesiis. Polliciti sumus etiam nos servaturos quicquid est cæremoniarum indifferentiam, propter concordiam ecclesiarum alendam. Sed has conditiones nondum acceperunt Epp. Nunc igitur expectamus violenta edicta. Nulla enim moderatione satisfieri sibi pontificiæ factionis homines patiuntur. Volunt nos prorsus perditos. Vale. 6th Septemb. 1530.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TERMINATION OF THE DIET OF AUGSBURG.

Luther counsels courage and trust in Christ—opposition to the schemes of reconciliation—expressed in his letters—his perfect comprehension of the Papacy—observations of Pallavicino on the policy of Rome—adverse principles of the two parties—the Emperor makes some further attempts—his first proposal rejected—his reply through Truchses—his menaces—firmness of the Protestants—conference on the restitution of the monastic revenues—threatening memorial of Charles—the negotiations then taken up by Truchses and Vehe—their very moderate proposals, after some deliberation, rejected—they offer still another suggestion—refused—fourteen articles presented by the Protestants—Decree of the Diet—substance—its moderation—bold reply of the Protestants—apology for the Confession—violence of the Elector of Brandenburg—calm answer of Pontanus—the Elector has his audience and departs—further discussions on the Turkish war—the Protestants decline the proposals made to them—the Recess of the Diet—more severe than the Decree—a sort of triumph for the Catholics—such as they had gained at Worms—a repetition of the former under altered circumstances.

It may be observed, that during these deliberations very little mention was made of the name of Luther. The Catholic members of the committee did indeed, on one occasion, provoke some discussion respecting his doctrines; and produced, with great triumph, a number of paradoxes and other indefensible extravagances found in his works. But the Protestant divines at once replied, that they were there, not to defend the opinions of any individual, but the doctrine of the Confession. The deputies of Nuremberg, on departing for the Diet, received an express order from the Senate not to bind

their faith in any manner to the writings or authority of Luther. It may seem strange that the father of the Reformation should have been thus disclaimed, as it were, by his own disciples; but this was in appearance only. So long as there remained any hope of reconciliation, it was no more than common discretion and courtesy, to remove out of the sight and thoughts of the papists their most detested foe. But in spirit he was not absent from the deliberations of his sons; and he influenced, if he did not altogether direct them, by his counsels. "Stand firm (he wrote to Spalatin on August 28) on the Gospel, and trust to that alone against the snares of the adversary; and should it come to pass, that you concede anything manifestly against the Gospel, and shut up that eagle in a wretched sack, Luther, do not doubt it, Luther will come, and in a magnificent fashion set the noble bird at liberty."

Two days earlier he very strongly expressed, to the same friend, his opinion of the pending attempts at reconciliation: "I hear, and in truth with no great pleasure, that you, at Augsburg, have undertaken a wonderful work—that, forsooth, of bringing the Pope and Luther to concord; but the Pope will never consent, and Luther deprecates. Take care that you do not prettily lose your pains. But if you should succeed, and bring them together against the wills of both, then will I presently follow your example, and reconcile Christ with Belial."

On the same day he wrote as follows to Melancthon: "Pray consider. What is there in that quarter which is not deceitful and treacherous? What is there that I have ever less hoped, or that I now less wish, than negotiations about an agreement in doctrine?—as if we had power to overthrow the Pope, or as if our doctrine could be preserved without detriment to

the popedom. . . . In a word, I am altogether opposed to any such attempt. Such a concord is wholly impossible, unless the Pope shall first allow his office to be abolished. It was enough that we gave a reason of our faith, and asked for peace: why do we vainly hope to convert them to the truth?"

Luther alone, among all the chiefs of the Reformation, appears to have penetrated the real mystery of the papal diplomacy. He alone seems to have clearly comprehended what a genuine Romanist really meant by the unity of the church; and to have seen that the very first principle of its policy and law of its existence was to yield nothing. His acquaintance with that secret shows itself chiefly in his private correspondence, in occasional short and abrupt remarks: on which indeed it is impossible to present a better commentary than that furnished by the Roman Catholic historian, in his account of these very deliberations.

After mentioning that Melancthon was forbidden to make further "condescensions," Pallavicino * proceeds to observe, that it was useless for him to have conceded anything, unless he had conceded everything. "In this respect the Lutherans and the Catholics were not on equal terms. The former, whatever sacrifices they might make, were still the conquerors, if they did not sacrifice everything. The latter sacrificed everything, if they sacrificed only one single point: just as the whole fortress is lost, however bravely all the rest of its bulwarks may be defended, if but the narrowest breach be practicable by the enemy. The whole of our system of faith depends upon one single article, and that is, the infallible authority of the church—so that, the very moment we should abandon any part of it, the whole would fall, it being

* Lib. iii. cap. iv.

clear that its individuality either remains entirely, or entirely perishes. And hence originates the received doctrine of St. Thomas, that one cannot disbelieve any article, be it what it may, without being in consequence void of faith in all: since in such case, though the others might perhaps be believed, it would be through private and human arguments, not through that supernatural object and motive common to all, which constitutes the act of faith."

I may here mention that, in pursuance of this policy, Campeggio absented himself at the reading of the Confession. He took no visible part in the disputations; he kept aloof, as it were, in the character of a judge, and left the cause to the ostensible management of the Emperor. His orders—his principles—were to make no concession; and if any treaty on mutual compromise had been concluded, without doubt he would have cancelled it.

Now reflecting on this, and at the same time considering that the first principle of the Reformation was the right of private judgment on religious matters, and that all the subsequent acts and writings of the reformers were guided more or less by that principle—considering that the plea of conscience, founded of course on the same basis, was now urged as irresistible both by divines and princes—can we conceive any doctrine more irreconcilable with that which taught, that so little as a single exercise of private judgment, on a single religious question, amounted to total apostacy? Luther did not exaggerate. It was as impossible for any sound and permanent concord to subsist between him and the Pope as between Christ and Belial. Clement was as well aware of this as Luther; and with him the words concord and unity had no other real meaning than the

restitution of his own authority, and the absolute surrender of the rebels.

Nevertheless the Emperor, who was not perhaps very deeply initiated in the principles of either side, and who saw no reason why religious, like political disputes, should not be arranged by concessions from both parties, or the submission of one, resumed his negotiations with the Protestants. On the 7th of September, after a consultation with the Catholic chiefs, he sent for them, and, in the presence of only five of their adversaries, with great moderation of tone and language and probably with perfect sincerity, urged on them the accustomed remonstrances; and after expressing his surprise how four or five princes, of inconsiderable power, should persist thus pertinaciously in supporting doctrines which were either altogether novel or already condemned, yet, since with so much earnestness they demanded a council for the decision of the differences, he promised to employ his exertions to obtain one—insisting, however, on this stipulation: that they, in the first instance, should place all religious concerns on their former footing, and restore everything that they had destroyed.

In making this proposal, Charles acted as the mere organ of the papal party, whose object would have been attained by the immediate triumph, and who would then have pleaded that the unity of the church was re-established, and the pretext for a council removed; but the Protestants were not deceived by so thin an artifice. Immediately, and in the most respectful terms, they declined the condition: they could not, they said, themselves approve the abuses which they had condemned in their Confession, nor, even were they so disposed, could they force them upon subjects now too enlightened to receive them.

In his reply, delivered after due deliberation by Truchses, grand master of the court of Ferdinand, the Emperor, desisting from that attempt, had recourse to the expedient of menaces tempered by expressions of mildness: The acts of the conferences had convinced him that the Protestants had many important doctrinal differences with the church, and he was astonished that they had rejected the conciliatory and condescending proposals made to them by the committee. It was their duty to abide by the decision of the majority, and not arrogantly to prefer their own opinion to that of the church, and their own wisdom to that of the Pope and all the other princes of Christendom. He then pressed them to renew the interrupted conferences; he promised to preside at them himself; he would grant them yet eight days longer to complete the work of concord; but, if they still refused, he was bound to inform them that they must expect the treatment which awaited schismatics, and that their safety was concerned in the discharge of their duty.

To renew the conferences under that threat, and under the auspices of a prince now avowedly their opponent, would have been to seal the fate of the Reformation—to deliver up the sacred cause to the mercy of the enemy, without disguise, without the shadow of a pretext, or the prospect even of illusory conditions. The Protestants were incapable of this treachery.

They replied (on the 9th of September) with perfect firmness. After the oft-repeated assurance that they were willing to abandon every opinion not founded in Scripture, they proceeded to re-assert their principle, that in a matter of conscience the decision of a majority could be of no weight, unless that majority were in itself a legitimate excuse before the tribunal of God. They declined to resume the conferences as useless, since they

had no further concession to offer; but they declared that their utmost care would be directed to preserve a political peace, so that the Emperor should have no cause to question either their fidelity to him, or their love for their common country.

With this answer terminated all direct communication between them and Charles. The negotiations which followed were of a more private character, and on that account more dangerous, and they afforded indeed very ingenious specimens of the pontifical diplomacy. But as they produced no result, I think it needless to pursue them into any details. A question, however, came into discussion at that moment, of which little mention had been previously made, as one subordinate to the loftier matters of doctrine and principle—the application of the confiscated revenues of the monasteries. On this subject Henry, Duke of Brunswick, held a conference with the Electoral Prince of Saxony, in which he maintained the impiety of turning to any profane purpose the funds consecrated to God, while the other justified their present appropriation by consideration of their former abuse, of the habitual rapacity of the Roman See, and of the sanctity of those charitable objects to which they were now devoted. Meanwhile the Elector proposed a compromise. He offered to place the property in sequestration for the space of two years, on condition that, if a council were not assembled during that time, he should then divert them from the nourishment of idleness and superstition to some holier uses. A counter proposal, made by the Duke in his office of mediator, on the 12th of September, that matters should be restored to their original state till the meeting of a council, was at once rejected by the Princes. The condition, which the Emperor had failed to obtain generally, namely, the provisional retractation of all their acts, he was now desirous to

secure on a single point; not only because the point was in itself important, as tending to the restoration of monachism, but also, because an advantage gained on that question might have led, by a series of petty contests, to success on all the rest. But he was foiled in the very first movement by the discreet vigilance of his antagonists.

In a memorial, which he addressed to the Roman Catholic princes immediately after his last conference with the Protestants, he disclosed his final intentions. In this threatening document, after dwelling at length on his exertions for the restoration of concord, on the liberality of his offers to the Reformers, on his determination to maintain at all hazards the union betwixt church and state, on the military force which might be placed at his disposal, and the success which must follow its operations against persons whom kindness and remonstrance had alike failed to move—he still recommended that a council should be granted them on two conditions: That they should first be reconciled to the Roman church; and that they should make restitution of the ecclesiastical property. He then proposed, that, if they refused this overture, they should be pursued without any mercy, and without any respect for the substance, dignity, or life of any one. He concluded by requesting information as to the amount of military contributions which he might expect from the Catholics.

These conditions, as has been already mentioned, were refused; but the resources of diplomacy were not yet exhausted. The negotiation, having been conducted without effect by the Emperor and the princes of his party, by bishops and doctors and civilians, was next consigned to the hands of two statesmen, Truchses and Vehe. These individuals, though they held high offices

under Catholic princes,* were believed to entertain opinions favourable to the Reformation, which they had not on all occasions been careful to suppress. This reputation made them at that moment the most hopeful instruments of the papal party, as being little suspected, or least suspected, by the other. These two mediators proposed—with what authority it does not appear, but doubtless with sufficient—seven articles of such apparent equity, that, after some little modification, many Reformers were prepared to accept them.

According to these articles: The points in dispute were to be submitted to the determination of a council; the confiscated property was to be placed in sequestration and employed for the maintenance of the religious order; the contested ceremonies in the celebration of mass were to be referred to the decision of the same council; and in respect to the double communion and the marriage of the clergy the Protestants were left to adopt such a course, as they should be able to justify before the Emperor and the council. Excepting that article, which stipulated the appropriation of the monastic revenues to monastic purposes, there was not one which was not in fact a compliance with the demands of the Protestants. Both parties agreed, or pretended to agree, that the final decision of the disputed questions should rest with a council; but the difference was, whether, during the previous interval, the Protestants should retain their present advantages, or restore things to their ancient condition. The Catholics demanded the latter; the Protestants would have been contented with the former—the one expecting thus to obtain their end without the council—the other aiming at least to gain time, for the

* Vehe, Chancellor of Baden.

further extension and confirmation of their work. What effect these articles might have produced, had they been accepted by the Protestants and ratified, as they probably would not have been, by the Pope, is not an easy nor an important question. Suffice it to mention, that Luther, to whose opinion they were submitted, immediately rejected them; and that the princes, after some deliberations and differences, arrived, by a majority, at the same decision.

On the 20th of September Vehe had a secret conference in the church of St. Maurice with Pontanus and Melancthon. On this occasion, he endeavoured, first, to intimidate the Reformers, and then to induce them to accept the mediation of Truchses, praising with justice the prudence and moderation of that minister, and mentioning the influence that he possessed over the mind of his master. But the Elector and his party refused the proposal, as only tending to prolong a vain and insidious negotiation.

Yet not thus entirely discouraged, these two distinguished persons made still one final attempt to effect a nominal reconciliation. On the 22nd, as the decree was on the point of being read, they entreated the princes in the most affectionate terms to embrace at least their present suggestion, which would be the means, even at that last hour, of securing the clemency of the Emperor. It was no more than this: That they would request of him a longer interval for consideration than the decree allowed them, and promise to obey the decree during such interval. To promise even a temporary obedience would have been at that moment almost equivalent to entire submission. Besides it was some reason for rejecting the counsel, that it must necessarily have proceeded, even though the channel of its conveyance was not objectionable, from the papal party.

On the day preceding, the Protestants took their final step, not clearly in any hope of effecting a reconciliation, but only to give the enemy another opportunity of refusing what seemed to them a reasonable petition. They presented fourteen articles to the Emperor, requesting to be allowed to profess them, until the council should come to its decision. The first portion of them related to the doctrine of justification by faith, the necessity of good works, confession, penitence, satisfactions, and the efficacy of the Sacraments. They then proceeded: That to preserve the unity of the church it was not necessary for all its members to observe human traditions; that agreement on articles of faith and the use of the Sacraments was sufficient; that every rite, established as a means of grace without God's commandment, was for that reason in opposition to the Gospel and obscured the merits of Christ; that monastic vows and works, performed in that view, were of this description;* that ceremonies of human institution, when not in themselves wicked, and performed from a feeling of submission, charity, or edification, might be permitted; but that they were not to be enjoined as religious duties, nor was the neglect of them blameable; that the invocation of the saints was uncertain and dangerous, and disparaging to the office of Mediator, with which Christ was invested; that to deprive the people of the use of the cup was to violate the institution of God; that the compulsory celibacy of the clergy was in disobedience to the precept of St. Paul; that the mass was not efficacious to non-communicants, nor did it confer any grace of itself; "though when God gives us the Sacrament of the body and blood, He gives us His grace, which we receive by faith."

* Art. 9. "*Vota monastica et monachorum vitam, cum opinione cultus divini institutam, plane cum Evangelio pugnare.*" Coelestin, tom. iii.

These articles were a fair re-statement of the doctrines of the Confession ; and in respect to some of the disputed questions, they expressed even a bolder condemnation of the tenets of Rome. And with them the negotiations did at length terminate.

The decree of the Diet respecting the religious disputes, which was read to the Protestants on the 22nd of September, was to the following effect : That the Confession of the Elector and his confederates had been publicly heard and confuted by arguments drawn from Scripture ; that in the subsequent conferences those princes had retracted part of their new doctrines, but still retained the rest ; that space was now allowed them, till the 15th of the ensuing April, to return to the doctrine of the church, at least till the decision of a council ; and that they were to make known their final resolution before that day. Meanwhile they were prohibited from publishing any new religious works, or making any fresh innovations, or preventing the return of their subjects to their ancient faith, or disturbing the monks in their revenues or observances. They were commanded to repress the Anabaptists and Sacramentaries. And in conclusion, the Emperor engaged on his part to exhort the Pope to convoke a council within six months from that time, which should be assembled within a year from the date of its convocation.

After the violent language, which had been so loudly reiterated by the chiefs of the dominant party, and the menaces which had been more than insinuated by the Emperor himself, what is remarkable in this manifesto is its moderation. It contained no harsh expressions, it conveyed no positive condemnation, it issued no oppressive command or prohibition—for the ordinance against the two sects of ultra-reformers was not so considered by the pure Lutherans ; and it promised the very con-

summation to which the Protestants perpetually professed to look for the redress of all their grievances.

The Protestants, as if emboldened by this forbearance, replied with unflinching resolution: That they were far from acknowledging that their doctrine had been confuted by Scripture; that on the contrary they still believed it to stand unshaken, and that they could have demonstrated this with certainty had a copy of the Refutation been granted them; that, in regard to the prohibition of new publications and additional innovations in their religion, they must adhere to the protest of Spire, whereof the principle was—to suffer no interference with the right which each of them claimed to regulate the religious concerns of his own dominions according to his knowledge and conscience; that as they had never forced any one to embrace their faith, so would they never repel any one from it. They promised to banish from their States all Anabaptists and Sacramentaries.

In the course of this address Pontanus presented to the court an “Apology for the Confession,” which had been composed in reply to the Refutation—so far at least as the substance of its argument could be collected by those who heard it—and this was afterwards amplified into a document of some historical importance. But the Emperor, at the suggestion of his brother, refused to receive it.

On the following day, the Protestants being again summoned into the imperial presence, the Elector of Brandenburg addressed them in a very different tone; he repeated the customary declaration respecting the indulgence of the Emperor and their contumacy, dwelling with particular warmth on the sacrilegious confiscation of the monastic revenues; and in conclusion menaced them with the immediate and armed vengeance of the Emperor and all his allies. Pontanus, in the name of

the Protestants, immediately replied, in those calm, considerate expressions, which, if they do not prove the goodness of a cause, afford at least the strongest evidence of the resolution to maintain it:

“The Confession which they had presented was derived from the word of God ; and resting on that foundation, it was placed above the efforts of the world and the devil ; in their conscience they could not approve the decree that had been read to them ; in themselves was neither obstinacy nor artifice ; they were prepared to concede all that the gospel permitted, and would explain with sincerity, on the appointed day, their creed and their intentions. In everything except religion their obedience was not surpassed by any princes of the empire, insomuch that they had learnt with surprise how some had bound themselves by oath to protect the imperial authority. If that league was intended against themselves, they had still greater cause for astonishment, since they had done no wrong to any one. As to the monastic property, which had been abandoned to them, they should be careful to turn it to such good purposes, as to leave their enemies no room for cavil.”

The only reply to this was a repetition of the former menaces and remonstrances, with the additional imputation, that the revolt of the peasants had been occasioned by the Reformers. And this slander called from them one additional and final profession of their confidence in the justice of God, in the purity of their faith, in the integrity of their conscience ; of their entire and notorious innocence of the charge now alleged against them ; and of their unshaken and devoted loyalty.

When these last altercations were thus ended, the Elector had his audience of leave. In the course of it he gave utterance to his conviction, “that the doctrine of the Confession was so supported by evident proofs

from Scripture, as to defy all the efforts of the devil:" on which the Emperor presented his hand to him and said: "Cousin, I should not have expected that from you."* On this, the Elector retired in silence, and immediately departed on his return to his dominions.

His ministers remained, and some further discussions were attempted; chiefly in the hope of inducing the Protestant States to contribute their contingent towards the Turkish war. To this end, a written promise was offered to them that their religious innovations should be tolerated till the council, on condition of their consent. The Protestants demanded that this promise should be officially authorised and published as a decree of the Diet; and when the others evaded this demand, and gave that fresh evidence of insincerity, they decidedly rejected the proposal. The Recess of the Diet was then published, on the 19th of November, and was in substance as follows:†

Those who denied the corporal presence were proscribed; the restoration of the ancient sacraments, rites, and ceremonies, in the places where they had been abolished, was commanded; so was the degradation of all married priests; nor were any other to be substituted for them, or instituted anywhere, without the approbation of the bishop. The images, which had been removed, were to be restored; the freedom of the will was

* "Ohm! ohm! das hätte ich mich zu E. Lbd. nicht versehen." The Elector is described as delighted that the struggle was at last over—*læto et alacri animo quasi tripudians*.

† The Recess was the same as the Edict, as far as the article concerning monasteries. The stringent clauses which followed may have been added in consequence of the contumacy of the Protestants—or they might have been even more stringent, had these been less firm. Seckendorf (L. ii. s. 35, § 78, Addit.) gives a compendium of a large volume called "Handlung der Religions sachen zu Augspurg," found in the archives of Wiemar, and supplying many deficiencies in Cœlestin and Chytræus.

asserted, and the opposite doctrine prohibited as insulting to God ; so was the doctrine of justification by faith alone ; obedience to the civil authorities was diligently inculcated ; the preachers were commanded to exhort the people to the invocation of the Virgin and the saints, the observance of feasts and fasts, and attendance at mass ; the monks were to obey the rules of their order ; the clergy to lead a reputable and decorous life. All who should attempt any change in doctrine or worship were made liable to personal inflictions. The destroyed monasteries were to be rebuilt, and their revenues restored to the monks. The decree was to be executed by military force wherever it might not find voluntary obedience, and the States of the empire were to unite their forces with those of the Emperor for that purpose. The imperial chamber was to pursue the rebels, and the neighbouring States to execute its sentences. The Pope was to be solicited to convoke a council within six months, to be assembled within a year from the date of its convocation.*

This manifesto is of course to be considered as the act of the Emperor and the papal party. The ministers of the Protestant princes refused to subscribe to it, and the representatives of the imperial cities declined all participation in it. Still, as the others formed the great majority of the members, it went forth as the decree of the Diet, binding upon the whole Germanic body ; for the principle, recently broached by the Protestants, that in matters of conscience the lesser number was not obliged by the decision of the larger, was yet acknowledged only by themselves. Its provisions were as pe-

* Pallavicino affects to consider the convocation of the council as conditional on the immediate submission of the Protestants. I can find no evidence for such a condition—the proceedings of the Diet render it improbable—and the Emperor certainly desired a council at any rate.

remptory and its penalties as stringent, as the purest papist could have required. In appearance it was a triumph for the Church. The great parliament of the empire, duly summoned and numerous attended, having undertaken to pass judgment on the religious differences, had investigated the points in dispute; listened to a public exposition of the arguments of both sides; instituted private conferences for the clearer examination of matters not easily reconciled in public; employed the space of five months in inquiry and discussion; and then, in the presence and under the direction of the Emperor himself, pronounced its deliberate decision against the Reformers. All this gave at least a show of justice to the verdict, and a pretext for exultation to the Catholics. The official judgment of the national authority was unequivocally pronounced in their favour.

But they had gained a similar triumph at Worms. Nine years before, when the divisions were yet obscure and indefinite, when the new opinions were yet unprotected by any party among the great, when not a single prince professed them, when Luther alone was the representative, if not the substance, of the entire Reformation—the high Church party had succeeded, at a Diet of equal celebrity with the present, in achieving a victory of exactly the same description. But in effect the edict of Worms was no real victory. As the events recorded in the foregoing pages will have shown, the violence of that manifesto, by rendering its execution impossible, gave an irrevocable advantage to those against whom it was levelled. An act of proscription emanating from so august a body, which decreed the destruction of one excommunicated monk and was unable to accomplish it, afforded the strongest evidence of the invincible strength, not of the individual thus assailed, but of the cause on

which he stood. The defender was indeed secure; but it was the rock which repelled the storm.

Since that time circumstances were materially altered and the changes had all taken place in one direction. The position, then occupied by Luther alone, was now filled by a numerous and organised party, conducted with great discretion by several princes of high personal respectability and power not inconsiderable—men accustomed to co-operate, and not always without success; whose cause was as sacred as it had ever been; who were devoted to its defence; and whom the habit of independence, the consciousness of a pure and holy purpose, and the evident protection of an approving Providence had confirmed and steeled in confidence. Against such a confederacy the Catholics now repeated the assault on the same ground, with the same weapons and in the same spirit, as before. The Recess of Augsburg was no more than the edict of Worms renewed and reconstructed according to the difference in external circumstances. The principle, the object, the meaning, everything but the letter was the same.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

REMARKS ON THE DIET—LUTHER AT COBURG.

Conversions to Protestantism consequent on this Diet—Confession of Zwingli—Melancthon's remarks on it and its authors—vain attempts of the Strasburgers at reconciliation with the Lutherans—the Tetrapolitan Confession—failure of the papal diplomatists in these negotiations, and their surprise at it—the clamour for a general council almost universal—real feelings of the Pope—of the Emperor—of the German princes—of the Lutheran party, on that subject—the Reformers gain by delay—discussion on the monastic revenues—that held to be a secular question by some moderate papists, and therefore within the Emperor's jurisdiction—remarks—the dangerous weakness of Melancthon—his second Letter to Campeggio—his suggestions such as would best have served the papacy—notions which may have led him to this infirmity—the fear of violence—the fear of dissensions—of wild and fanatical opinions—sentiments of Erasmus nearly those of Melancthon—his Letter to Campeggio—exhorting moderate measures—remonstrance of the divines and magistrates of Nuremberg—Letters of Luther from Coburg—to Erasmus—to J. Jonas—on the restoration of episcopal jurisdiction—of the authority of the Pope—his devotion in prayer—frequency and earnestness—account of Vitus Theodorus—his various occupations at Coburg—translation of *Æsop's fables*—his Letter to his son John—his Letter to his "Friends at Augsburg," from the "Diet of Grain-peckers."

THE first effect of the proceedings of this Diet was favourable to the Protestants. The character of their religious doctrine was relieved from much misrepresentation. The suspicions which had been attached to their principles of civil obedience, and which the insurrection of the peasants had magnified and irritated, were removed. Their respectful demeanour recommended their very constancy in resistance; and some of their more

moderate adversaries began to lean towards them, and not very long afterwards passed over to their party. Among these the most important converts were Herman, Archbishop of Cologne; Frederic Count Palatine, first minister of the Emperor and afterwards Elector; Eric Duke of Brunswick; the Dukes of Mecklenburgh and Pomerania; Joachim, Prince Electoral of Brandenburg, who soon afterwards succeeded his father; and George Ernest, son of Prince William of Hennenberg. Some free cities, hitherto papal or neutral, declared in favour of the Reformation; and even the Emperor and his brother carried away with them a less bigotted aversion for the faith and name of Protestant, than they had imbibed from the lessons of their ecclesiastical counsellors.

Besides the great confession of the Lutheran churches, two expositions of faith were presented at the Diet by others claiming with equal justice the appellation of Reformers. One was sent by Zwingli; and though Melancthon affected to consider it as the mere act of an individual, it no doubt embodied the opinions of his evangelical compatriots. "Of this man you will say neither more nor less than that he is not in his senses. On original sin and the use of the Sacraments, he has returned to his old errors. On ceremonies he speaks very barbarously; he would sweep them all away at a single blow. He will admit no bishop; and he dwells on his favourite notion of the Sacrament. . . ." Thus

* The following are Zwingli's expressions on this subject in his "Fidei Ratio ad Carolum Imp., July 3, 1530 :"—"Octavo de Eucharistia: Credo quod in Eucharistiæ, i. e. Gratiarum actionis, cœna, verum Christi corpus adsit, fidei contemplatione; hoc est, quod ii qui gratias agunt Domino, pro beneficio nobis in filio suo collato, agnoscunt illum veram carnem assumpsisse, vere in illa passum esse, vere nostra peccata sanguine suo abluisse, et sic omnem rem per Christum gestam illis fidei contemplatione quasi præsentem fieri. Sed quod Christi corpus per essentiam et realiter, hoc est corpus ipsum naturale, in cœna aut adsit,

Melancthon wrote to Luther. To Bucer he addressed at the same time the following remarks: "Zwingle has sent hither a confession; in which he certainly wishes to appear to agree with us in doctrine; but goes out of his way to bluster on certain other articles, that he may irritate the Emperor still further against us all.* It appears to be a Helvetian rather than a Christian spirit, which has impelled this man to send hither a confession so fiercely expressed, so unseasonably. . . ." It was a singular position in which Melancthon had then placed himself. The disciple, the son, almost the worshipper of the author of the Babylonish Captivity, he took a peevish offence at Zwingle for a far more moderate condemnation of the same tyranny. But it was his present fancy to conciliate "Antichrist;" and he trembled lest his little projects should be dissipated by the honest and consistent boldness of the champion of Switzerland, and he repudiated him accordingly.

The enlightened theologians of Strasburg, Bucer, Hedio, Capito, and the senator James Sturm, were never wearied with preaching to the Lutherans the necessity of union. Bucer even journeyed to Coburg to confer with Luther on the subject, and received an answer not

aut ore dentibusque nostris mandatur, quemadmodum papistæ et *quidam qui ad ollas Ægyptiacas respectant*, perhibent, id vero non tantum negamus, sed errorem esse, qui verbo Dei adversatur, constanter adseveramus. . . ." This is a specimen of what Melancthon called "ferocity." Zwingle wrote besides "An Epistle to the Most Illustrious Princes of Germany, assembled in Diet at Augsburg," on Aug. 27 following; in which he treated the Sacraments generally, and still further explained his doctrine on the Eucharist.

* "Zinglius huc misit confessionem; in qua certe non vult videri discrepare a nostra sententia; et præter rem tumultuatur in aliis quibusdam articulis, *ut magis etiam irretet adversus nos omnes rōν Αὐτοκρατορᾶς*. Videtur in homine magis Helveticus quidam quam Christianus spiritus, qui impulerit eum tam ferociter scriptam confessionem minime in tempore huc mittere."

entirely unfavourable. The zeal of the Landgrave on this subject was sufficiently known. The wisdom of the proposition could scarcely be disputed: yet Melancthon resisted it with unyielding obstinacy. The more flexible he was in his condescensions to the Legate, the more rudely did he repel the Sacramentaries. The more humbly he bent before the powerful foe, the more insolently did he reject the unpopular ally. The more he taxed his ingenuity to disguise and dissemble numerous and manifest breaches on the one side, the more did he strive to widen one not very perceptible rent on the other. As if to make amends for timidity by bigotry, he visited upon his brother-reformers the wrath which he feared to vent against the dominant establishment, and thought to conciliate an implacable enemy by the sacrifice of an importunate friend.

At length the chiefs of the insulted party, perceiving that their attempts were hopeless, drew up their own confession, and presented it to the Diet. It differed in no respect from that of Melancthon, except in the tenth article, on the doctrine of the real presence. It was signed by the deputies of the four imperial cities, Strasburg, Constance, Memmingen and Lindau. From this circumstance it is commonly known in history as the Tetrapolitan Confession. Those overtures from the more detested section of the Reformers, disclaimed as they were by their own natural allies, could expect no sort of favour from the Catholics. Their creed, indeed, was honoured by an insolent refutation from Faber and Eck;* but their persons, as we have seen, were condemned

* This refutation was again refuted by Bucer and Hedio; who in their anxiety, again, to conciliate Luther, employed expressions so equivocal about the Eucharist, as to be susceptible either of a Swiss or Saxon interpretation—*magno ecclesiarum earum, imprimis Argentinensis, malo. Scultet. Annal. Evang. Renov. A.D. 1530.*

without mercy; and when the Lutherans signified their assent to that article in the decree, had they done nothing to deserve the condemnation, which descended so soon afterwards and from the same hand upon themselves?

The pontifical ministers at Augsburg, the flower of the diplomacy of the Vatican, guided by the subtle and experienced genius of Campeggio, were astonished to perceive the inefficacy of their talents. Day after day their designs were penetrated and their artifices eluded by men of no pretension to political skill, by Germans, natives of obscure provinces, subjects of petty princes, unpractised in the arts of courts, uninstructed even in the rudiments of intrigue. It was in vain that they taxed their ingenuity for some fresh expedient to succeed those which had failed—it was defeated by the same considerate discretion and suspicious sagacity. And it was this that surprised them. For in the vanity of their cunning they despised that which was less artful than themselves, and mistook the absence of duplicity for dulness or ignorance. Besides, they had not taken as elements into their calculations the sincerity and integrity of their adversaries; they had not counted on the force of religious conviction, and the inflexibility of an earnest conscience. They reasoned not only from the perversion of their own talents, but from the dishonesty of their own characters; and thus they were filled with wonder, when they saw their snares perpetually avoided, and all the resources of their craft exhausted in vain. And the more so, indeed, on this occasion, since so many opportunities had been presented to their talents by the long duration of the private negotiations. For it was in that field that their arts were the most formidable—as even the history of these few years has proved: it was thus that Miltitz seduced the spirit of Luther to his weakest concession. It was thus that Pope Clement at

Bologna prevailed upon the Emperor to abandon his immediate demand of a council ; and it was even thus that during this very Diet Melancthon was partly cajoled and partly frightened into a disposition not far removed from subservience. Yet with all these advantages, and the countenance of the Emperor openly shining upon them, these practised politicians, though they obtained some partial advantages, were unable to betray their opponents into any important indiscretion, or any lasting weakness ; and the long narrative of their multifarious operations exhibits only a series of manœuvres conducted with persevering address and baffled with considerate constancy.

In examining the proceedings of this Diet we observe that the wish for a general council was expressed almost universally ; and that even those, who seemed least to desire it, made their appeals to its future decisions whenever they found it expedient to do so. Almost all the particular schemes for reconciliation, from whichever party they proceeded, contained that provision ; and the official edicts of the Diet solemnly engaged that the expectation should no longer be deceived. But though it might suit the immediate purposes of all to raise that clamour, or at least not to oppose it when raised by others, yet we must not imagine that all were sincere in this matter, or even that those who were sincere attached exactly the same ideas to their demand. In the first place, the Pope and his immediate adherents entertained the most decided repugnance to the proposal. This was manifested at Bologna. And besides the general arguments, there so plausibly and for the time so successfully urged, there was another of a private nature, and not for that reason the less cogent, which Clement was careful to dissemble. He was illegitimate, and therefore not eligible to the Popedom. It could be proved besides,

that he had procured his elevation by acts of corruption. The councils of Constance and Basle had set precedents of ecclesiastical disloyalty, which would not be lost on the less servile spirits of a more enlightened age, and the misfortunes of John XXIII. might be repeated in his own person—there was nothing in this at all improbable; and the apprehension was sufficient to fix his secret resolution, however he might amuse the Emperor by conditional promises, not at least to create the instrument of his own destruction.

Charles, on the other hand, was really desirous of the council. He had nothing to fear from it in respect to his own authority, or credit—Sigismond had even gained in reputation, if not in power, by the transactions at Constance—and there was no nobler field for the display of political talent, or, should that prove a part of policy, of imperial virtue. He hoped, besides, that it would reconcile, without the sword, the religious dissensions of his empire; at least, he perceived it would take away the last and strongest pretext for the contumacy of the Reformers. And he probably intended that it should relieve the people of Germany from the fiscal contributions, exacted under so many pretences by the rapacity of the court of Rome. In this last expectation the German princes of all parties most sincerely united. Even the Catholics had not forgotten, in their present zeal for the papal ascendancy, the Hundred Grievances of Nuremberg, and they looked with eagerness for what they deemed, perhaps, the only constitutional means of emancipation. Moreover, there were few or none among them who were not, in a certain sense, Church-Reformers. They were disgusted by the manifold impurities and indecencies of the Church, and they were desirous so to remove or mitigate those scandals, as to restore the sacred edifice to its ancient beauty and strength.

Even among the Reformers there was a section very willing to adopt this last view, and Melancthon may, at that moment, have belonged to it. But the very great majority, following the more decided course of Luther and Zwingli, did not really look for any reconciliation with the church of Rome; and therefore it was to them a matter of comparative indifference, whether the council assembled or not. It is true, they made their appeals to it perpetually, and were the loudest in their clamours for its convocation; because thus they gave a show of equity to their provisional claims—a show of subordination and loyalty to all their proceedings. Besides, they gained time, which was essential to their success.

As long as the council was not called, they reaped positive advantage from the suspense and delay, besides the moral benefit derived from the reasonableness of their demand. And if at length it should be assembled, which Luther did not expect, they doubted not that they should find either some cause to question its impartiality, and so disclaim its authority; or some means, if it were really a fair tribunal, to influence its decisions. But the council to which they would have submitted was not such as the Pope was likely to grant. They required that its deliberations should be free; and that it should meet in Germany—two stipulations to which Clement, as he valued his crown, was certain never to assent. Such seem to have been the feelings of all parties in respect to this important question, when Charles obliged himself by the solemn act of the Recess to employ his utmost exertions to procure the consummation demanded by the mass of his subjects, and promising, as he may have thought, to restore the peace of his empire.

It has been observed, that at the close of the discussions at Augsburg the Catholics advanced a subject of remonstrance, of which we find no mention at preceding

conferences, but which they pressed, nevertheless, with even more warmth than any other—the confiscation of certain monastic revenues by the Protestant princes. The earlier controversies regarded the sanctity of monastic vows, and the merit or demerit of monastic observances; but the question at last degenerated into a question of property. Henry Duke of Brunswick, who had an interview with the electoral prince of Saxony on this matter, was not unfavourable to the principles of the Reformation. So far at least he was removed from extreme opposition to them, as to maintain that the breach of certain ecclesiastical institutions did not justify an appeal to arms. About the communion in one kind, the marriage of the clergy, or the abolition of masses, he would never have waged war against any one. But the restitution of the property of the monks he held to be a matter purely secular, and maintained that the Emperor had a perfect right to demand it, and to call upon the princes of the empire to support his demand. There was some justice in this distinction, and it may have been perceived by many of the moderate Catholics. It was no sufficient answer to say, that the monks ejected were not personally the proprietors of the goods, or that these were more profitably applied to pious and charitable purposes. So long as the church remained, they were the property of the church, and they could only cease to be so by its total dissolution. It was inconsistent in the Protestant princes to acknowledge its authority, and to seek a reunion with it, so long as they presumed to dispose in any way of any part of its possessions. They ought either to have rejected it altogether as one great usurpation, or to have refrained, during the suspense, from making any permanent application of its revenues. Therefore it was not an unfair proposal to place them in

sequestration, under the imperial safeguard, until the conclusive decision of the council.

Respecting the spirit, in which Melancthon performed his difficult office at the Diet, I have freely made such remarks as his acts and proposals suggested, not imputing to him any dishonesty of purpose, but only that moral infirmity which is so commonly conjoined with literary acquirements, but which may be as dangerous in the conduct of a great cause as positive perfidy. In his celebrated letter to Campeggio he painted his own character for the information of all posterity. Yet this was at the outset of the business, before the real views of the papists were betrayed. It might be, that he would read in their succeeding measures some lessons of distrust in them, of confidence in the holiness of his own cause; it might be, that he would repent of his humiliation and revoke, on better instruction, the proposals which he had tendered with too much simplicity. But so far was he from this disposition, that after the discussions were closed, a few days only before the publication of the edict, he addressed to the same personage a second letter in the same tone and with the same object as the first.

After again declaring that the doctrine of the Reformers was in perfect agreement with that of Rome, and that there was no obstacle to reunion, except the ignorance or malevolence of certain doctors, he proceeded: "It is very true that we have changed some observances, and displayed much wrath against the Church of Rome. But considering the relaxation of the monastic discipline, the defects in the monastic institutions, and the degenerate morals of the priesthood, some excuse may be made for those who have censured this corruption. Every establishment is subject to disturbances when its discipline is relaxed, and it is easier

to appease such troubles by clemency than by rigour. And in this conviction I intreat you, in the name of God, not to augment these dissensions by measures of severity. If an appeal be made to arms, you will immediately see religion involved in dreadful confusion, and new doctrines and new heresies starting up in every quarter; for such are precisely the occasions which turn to the profit of the wicked. These fears of mine are not unfounded, and I have communicated my reasons for them to persons of merit.

“It is easy for you to prevent this. Concede to us only a few points, or, if you will not concede, connive, and peace may be restored. Permit the communion in both kinds, and tolerate the marriage of priests and monks. If it be not expedient to yield these openly, some pretext may be found for dissembling, so that the thing may drag on until a council shall be assembled. Concerning mass, some device may be discovered by good and learned men, so that that may be no longer a cause of dissension.* We on our parts will agree to restore obedience and jurisdiction to the bishops. So that should some slight want of uniformity still remain in those matters, nevertheless, as the churches would be subject to the same bishops, there would be no appearance of discord, especially since their agreement on the doctrines and articles of faith would be complete. And thus the bishops, having the clergy once more under

* “*Paucis rebus vel condonatis vel dissimulatis posset restitui concordia, viz. si nostris utraque species permetteretur, si conjugia sacerdotum et monachorum tolerarentur. Hæc si aperte concedi non videretur utile, tamen prætextu aliquo dissimulari possent, viz. quod res extraheretur donec synodus cogatur. De Missa etiam iniri ratio posset a bonis et doctis viris, nequid dissidii pareret amplius. Nostris viciassim conveniet reddere episcopis obedientiam et jurisdictionem. . . .*”—*Apud Cœlestin., tom. iii. fol. 137.*

their control, would by the exercise of their authority gradually get rid of all inconveniences, provided only they would consent to restore the ecclesiastical discipline so long neglected. Surely it would be a work of virtue, agreeable to God and worthy of distinguished men, to heal these disorders by reason, rather than to excite fearful tumults, which even those of most influence may not afterwards find it easy to repress."

In this singular document we find Melancthon pleading, as if he were at heart the friend and ally of the papal establishment; and we cannot forbear to observe, as was unsparingly observed by his contemporaries,* that, had he deliberately designed an act of treachery, had he calmly purposed to deliver up the sacred cause, then especially committed to his charge, to the mercy of the enemy, and that too in the manner most certain to terminate in its destruction, he would have suggested exactly that policy, precisely those expedients, which are

* "Non credis quanto in odio sim (said Melancthon, Epist. 20) Noricis et nescio quibus aliis propter restitutam Episcopis jurisdictionem : Ita de suo regno, non de Evangelio dimicant socii nostri. Amicus quidam scripsit me si quanta voluissem maxima pecunia a Romano Pontifice conductus essem, non potuisse meliorem rationem suscipere restituendæ dominationis pontificiæ, quam hanc esse judicent homines, quam instituimus. Ego nullum adhuc articulum deserui aut abjeci, qui ad doctrinam pertineat: tantum stomachabantur de politicis rebus, quod non est nostrum eripere Episcopis." The reason he gave for this indignation against him in another letter (Epist. 171) was this: "Vulgus assuefactum libertati et semel excusso jugo Episcoporum ægre patitur rursum sibi imponi illa vetera onera; et maxime oderunt istam dominationem civitates imperii. De doctrina religionis nihil laborant; tantum de regno et libertate sunt solliciti." Camerarius wrote to Agricola Islebuius, who was at Augsburg, to inquire what truth there was in the reports generally circulated, not among the vulgar only, but among their teachers, concerning the weakness of Melancthon. The latter in reply referred to a letter written by him in the third person to Ebner, in which he justified his ἐντελεια.—Cœlest., tom. iii. fol. 65. Camerarius was the intimate friend of Melancthon.

contained in this letter; that is, he would have removed or dissembled those striking points of difference by which the feelings of the people were principally roused, and then would have again consigned them to the instructions of such ministers as the bishops might choose to approve; at the same time restoring to those bishops, who were themselves the creatures and instruments of Rome and adhered almost in a body to the cause of Rome, the plenitude of their ecclesiastical authority. For it was in vain that he might affect to impose some nominal restraints on that authority, or to retain for the moment some ceremonial distinctions. These, as he himself foresaw, would have presently melted away under the influence of episcopal supremacy. And, the great principles of the Reformation once abandoned, the congregations of the Reformers would have gradually returned, after no very long resistance, and with some very slight modifications, to the faith and practice of their forefathers.

Yet he meditated no treachery. He only trembled at the menaces of violence, and to avoid the perils of a passing tempest he would have run his bark among the far more fatal shoals of dissimulation and compromise.

His reluctance to commit these matters to the arbitration of the sword was heightened by the fury which he beheld in the papal party; by the little mercy to be expected from the authors of so many crusades and the destroyers of so many heresies; by the scruples which he still entertained as to the lawfulness of repelling force by force; and, even could these be removed, by the comparative weakness of his own party—thus he had no other prospect in his imagination than the cause of truth overthrown and drowned in the blood of its defenders. He deemed, besides, that the rage of the Catholics proceeded in a great measure from the loss of

their authority; that, whatever clamour they might choose to raise respecting doctrines and observances, the blow which they most sensibly felt was the deprivation of power; and he willingly hoped that, if this should only be restored to them, they would employ it with so much discretion as to leave all the other disputed points in possession of the Protestants. But chiefly he feared the consequences which would ensue from the dissolution of the ecclesiastical polity. When the hand should be withdrawn, which held together by a single chain and as a single body the numerous and various establishments of the Christian world, he foresaw no other result than confusion and anarchy. He trembled lest that universal church, which was in theory indeed the beautiful representation of religious concord, should in after times be broken up into a multitude of independent and incongruous institutions, modelled according to the pleasure of the secular magistrates, and subjected to their capricious supremacy.

He feared too, lest, in the laxity prevailing through this independence, new and wild opinions should spring up with unrestrained fertility, disfiguring the face and corrupting the heart of the Catholic church of Christ. From the shadows of these calamities, which to his anxious and foreboding mind appeared larger and darker than they have really proved, Melancthon would have fled for safety even into the embraces of the papal despotism, fondly fancying that he might induce it, by wise reasonings and soft persuasions, to relax its grasp and mitigate its sway; and that then, while it was at the very height and fulness of all its corruptions, while its pride was bloated by perpetual success, while nothing was farther from the thoughts of its hierarchs than any serious purpose of self-amendment; and while it abounded more than at any former time with open, con-

temptuous profligacy, rapacity, arrogance, and unprincipled tyranny—that then it was to be purified in a moment by the admixture of Lutheranism, or at least to receive its repentant rebels with a holy embrace, and unite with them in the common profession of evangelical principles.

Whatever surprise, however, may be felt, that such a view of the prospects of the Reformation should have been taken by the disciple and associate of Luther, there is none in perceiving that the same, or nearly the same, were the notions of Erasmus. He was not present at the Diet. The Emperor, indeed, expressed a wish that he should assist in the intended work of reconciliation, for which his moderate opinions, as well as his ancient intimacy with Melancthon, singularly qualified him. But he was too cautious to involve his credit in negotiations, of which he probably foresaw the futility, or to commit his person among the numerous enemies, whom he had contrived to create in both parties. Accordingly he pleaded sickness and remained at Friburg. But he wrote from that place a long letter to Campeggio (on August 18),* containing

* August 20, according to Cœlestine. The letter contains sixteen reasons why the Emperor should not make war with the Protestants, but, on the contrary, tolerate them. The Emperor listened to the former, but not to the latter counsel. In the following extract from another epistle, also written to Campeggio during the Diet and cited by Seckendorf (l. ii. s. 34, § 76), Erasmus complains with some cause of the ingratitude of his papal friends:—

“*Scripsi diatriben: exortus est Stunica, cum suis conclusionibus. . . . Scripsi Hyperaspisten: exortus est Bedda cum suis virulentis calumniis; Scripsi contra Vulturium et Bucerum: exortus est Albertus Pius*”—all three good churchmen and bitter assailants of Erasmus. It was natural; for Erasmus, though a decided Anti-Lutheran, always used his influence, with Popes, Princes, and Legates, to dissuade them from violence and vengeance. His expectations as to the result of the Diet in either contingency are well expressed in a letter, of September 6, to one

his opinions and advice, and wisely and strongly recommending measures of toleration.

He observed: That the power of the Emperor, though great, was not universally acknowledged, and that the Germans were rather his masters than his subjects; that the doctrines of Luther were disseminated far and wide through Germany, and that that "chain of evils" extended from the ocean to the very borders of Switzerland; that if the Emperor were to abandon himself wholly to the counsels of the Pope, he would find few to applaud or support him; that the real danger was from the Turks, and the real object to unite the whole of Christendom against them; that the meditated war against the Protestants might very well recoil against the Emperor himself; that the love of sects was indeed reprehensible enough, but that in this case there was another question—the safety of the commonwealth; that the church was in danger in olden times, when the Arians, Pagans, Donatists, Manichæans were scattering abroad their doctrines, yet that it emerged from all those calamities, as the severest diseases sometimes receive their best remedies from time; that the Bohemians were tolerated, though they rejected the Roman pontiff; and that in his opinion it would be the wisest expedient to extend that toleration to the Lutherans, for, great as this evil would be, it would still be not so great as war.

Yet were there some among the Reformers who thought that even peace might be purchased at too dear a price. The progress of the negotiations was watched by the multitudes, whose temporal and spiritual happiness was involved in them, and who did not suppress the jealous anxiety occasioned by the course they appeared

Quinonius: "Si quid Sectis concedet Cæsar, clamabunt se victores; nec video qui laturo sint illorum insolentiam. Sin vicerit altera pars, quis feret monachorum tyrannidem?"

to be taking. The first who remonstrated were the divines and magistrates of the Lutheran city of Nuremberg. They boldly declared against the restoration of the monasteries, of the confession, of fasts, and, above all, of the jurisdiction of the bishops: "since they were persuaded that the bishops would infallibly abuse it, and that they would never want pretexts to refuse ordination to the pastors of the Protestants and to destroy them; that peace on those conditions would be pernicious; that the princes had been deluded by ambiguous articles, of which the only effect would be to disseminate dissensions; and that war, terrible an evil as it was, was yet less to be dreaded than a violation of conscience." They concluded by entreating the Elector and the Landgrave to revoke those concessions as the work of individuals who had exceeded their commission, and as only conditionally binding on their authors.* From the resolute spirit which was displayed in this seasonable remonstrance, and which doubtless was shared by many in all the reformed states and cities, it is clear that, even had Melancthon brought his conciliations to the end he desired, had he obtained a political peace on the conditions that he so eagerly offered, his treaty would have been rejected by a large proportion even of the Lutheran adherents of the Reformation. Neither his own persuasions nor the Elector's authority would have enabled him to impose it

* Melancthon, writing to Vitus Theodorus, who was a teacher of the Gospel at Nuremberg, said, on September 10, "Tui cives valde reprehendunt nostram *ἐπιτελειαν*, æquitatem. Sed his ut spero, si modo continget pax, facile satisfacimus." And again, about the same time, "Tui cives mirifice criminantur me propter restitutam episcopis jurisdictionem. Interim dissimulant quid doleat ipsis . . . et cavillantur in nostris actionibus quedam alia de sanctis." There is a singular declaration made by him in the former of these letters, that the principal obstacle to "the peace" was the intractability of his own party—"Ac fortasse pacem facere possemus, si nostri essent paullo tractabiliiores."

upon the people. Such a termination of the matter would, then, only have occasioned fresh breaches among the Reformers, without at all closing the original schism. But God's good Providence ordered it otherwise; and according to a not uncommon method of dealing with His creatures, He counteracted evil by evil, and remedied the infirmity of the one party by the perverse pertinacity of the other.

While Melancthon was thus trying all the expedients of a mere human policy, while he was thus regarding externals and calculating with a minute penetration the ecclesiastical interests of his posterity, the letters of Luther, written from his desolate seclusion (*Ex Eremitio*) breathed for the most part the spirit of another world. A constant determination pervaded them, that not a shred of the Gospel shall be conceded. He took his stand on the truths of the Christian doctrine and the confidence of Divine protection. And with a heart thus fortified and unshrinking, he descended not to the speculations of earthly cunning; but, convinced that the work was the work of God, and resolved that it should suffer no stain or corruption from mortal hands, he consigned it at once to the care of its eternal Author. "In my opinion," he wrote to Melancthon, "too much has been already conceded in the Confession. If they will not accept that, I know not what more I can possibly yield to them. May the Lord Jesus sustain you, that your faith may not fail, but grow and triumph! Amen. I pray for you; I have prayed, and will continue to pray. I have not any question that I am heard, since I feel the *Amen* in my heart. Should that, which we wish, not happen, then will something else happen, which is better." He wrote to Justus Jonas to the same effect: "I am resolved to yield nothing to our adversaries. They are laughing

at us; and, being at once the most insolent and the most wicked of mankind, they insult us in the pride of their superior power. I conjure you, break off all negotiation with them. Let them act, and return to your homes. They have the Confession. They have the Gospel. Let them receive them if they will. If not, let them depart on their business. Let war follow or not. It matters nothing. We have offered peace, and that is sufficient."

Respecting the more delicate subject of the restoration of episcopal jurisdiction, which, as it involved no point of doctrine, could not be considered as unscriptural, he addressed to Melancthon the following just warnings: "As to the jurisdiction of the bishops, I am fully convinced that in granting it, you stipulate for the purity of the Gospel and the liberty of announcing it; but I fear that in your endeavours to avoid one war you are engaging in another more dangerous. If you submit to the authority of the bishops, they will accuse us of inconstancy and revolt, from the moment that we shall refuse them entire obedience. They will extend indefinitely all that you shall accord to them, and they will curtail, so as to render wholly useless, all that you shall obtain from them."

Nevertheless, as this was a question which directly related only to externals—a matter of human policy and calculation, not of inward spiritual conviction, Luther did not absolutely insist upon his opinion. Though his objections to the concession were incomparably more sound and stable than the hope on which it was founded, yet he waived them and consented. Doubtless it was a reluctant consent, as it was unquestionably opposed to his better judgment; yet such being the great remedy proposed by his friends for the removal of all differences,

he at least permitted, if he did not approve, the experiment, especially as he did not really believe that any definite agreement would after all result from it.*

At the same time it must be mentioned that he never consented to restore the authority of the Pope. On that head he remained inflexible. So that it was probably his design (if he had any fixed design) to re-establish the episcopal government in the several churches which had embraced the Reformation, as subordinate in each instance to the civil, and to construct so many national establishments under that polity. At least it is not at all true, as some have argued, that the restoration of the bishops of necessity implied that of the Pope, though Melancthon probably, and the Catholics avowedly, understood it with that implication.

There was no more ardent quality in the character of Luther than his intense devotion in prayer and his assiduity in the performance of that duty. We perceive this spirit so pervading his letters, that there are few in which

* On September 20, he thus wrote to Wenceslaus Link. "Though Philip may possibly (*Philippus etsi forte*) have treated about certain conditions, yet thus far no agreement is come to in respect to any of them, not even on his own part (*ne ipsius quidem consensu*). But I hope that Christ has put on that mask, that he may illude our illuders, and excite them to a joyful but treacherous hope and dream, that we are going to yield, and they to be the masters—when they may presently discover that nothing is less likely, and that they have been themselves the persons mocked. This, at least, is my interpretation of the matter, as I feel quite secure that their consent is altogether vain without mine." (No. 1305.) He wrote another strong letter to Justus Jonas on the same day, against all concession, and one to Nic. Hausman three days later. The jurisdiction of the bishops was much discussed in these; and it was assumed of course that its restoration was to be conditional, on their permitting the preaching of the Gospel and removing all abuses. But how vague a condition was this! Who were to be the judges of the abuses? the Reformers or the Bishops? With them the greatest abuse was the suppression of their own authority.

he does not either offer up some sort of supplications himself, or entreat those of others in behalf of himself or his cause. There are likewise many occasions on which he expresses in the strongest terms his confidence in the efficacy of his prayers. More than once he solemnly menaces an obdurate foe, that he will overthrow him by the force of his appeals to God against him. This essential effect and evidence of his faith is mentioned by Melancthon and other contemporaries. But the most striking illustration of their assertions is furnished by a letter addressed to Melancthon, during the period just described by Vitus Theodorus. This divine was Luther's associate at Coburg, and thus described his religious habits:

“Not a day passes but he spends three hours, and the very hours most suited to study, in prayer. It once happened to me to hear him at prayer. Blessed God, what spirit, what faith there is in his very words! He offers his petitions with all the reverence that is due to God, yet with such hope and faith as if he felt that he were conversing with a father and a friend. ‘I know,’ he said, ‘that Thou art our Father and our God; I am, therefore, well assured, that thou wilt destroy the persecutors of thy children. But if Thou shalt not do this, the peril is thine as well as ours. This whole affair is thine. We engaged in it only by compulsion. Thou, therefore, wilt defend it.’ When I heard him from some distance praying with a clear voice almost in these words, my own soul was likewise inflamed with a peculiar emotion,—with such friendly familiarity, with such seriousness, with such reverence, did he converse with God. And amidst his prayers he vehemently pressed the promises from the Psalms, as if he were sure that all his petitions would be brought to pass. Neither can I then

doubt that his prayers will have great weight in restoring our almost desperate condition at the Diet.”*

Besides his various correspondence at Coburg, with princes as well as theologians, on subjects of the greatest moment to Christendom, and which were so frequently altering their aspect as to give occasion for continual consideration and anxiety, he found space for other occupations. He pursued his translation of the Prophetic Writings of the Old Testament; he composed explanations of the Psalms; and with a view to the moral instruction of the next generation, he translated *Æsop's Fables*. Among profane writings there was none which he loved better than this; for there was a philosophical playfulness which particularly distinguished his private and social character, and which might even be suspected from some passages in his most serious works—a gaiety of mind, which was seldom unaccompanied by some moral meaning, and proceeded from the warmth of his imagination. For this, as has already been observed, was one of the strongest of his intellectual organs; and if it betrayed him into occasional extravagances, from which his strong counteracting judgment was not always able to preserve him, it endowed him likewise with a power of invention and illustration, which sometimes gave irresistible force to his arguments.

Of that fanciful vivacity which was peculiar to him, and which threw not unfrequent gleams over the harshness and peremptoriness of his public character, I shall here transcribe two very beautiful specimens, both composed in this his solitude of Coburg.

The following letter he addressed to his son John: “Grace and peace in Christ to my dear little son! I am glad to find that you learn your lessons well, and

* Apud Melchior Adam. Vit. Germanorum Theolog. Vita Lutheri.

that you are diligent in saying your prayers. Go on in this way, my dear boy, and when I come home I will bring you a nice present from the fair.

"I know of a certain delightful garden; in it there are a great many children who wear little golden coats, and pick up under the trees the beautiful apples and pears, cherries and different sorts of plums; they sing, dance, and enjoy themselves, and they have pretty little horses, with golden bridles and silver saddles. I asked the owner of the garden whose children these were? He answered, 'They are children who love to pray and to study, and are good.' Then said I, 'Dear Sir, I have a son named Johnny Luther; may he not come into this garden, that he may eat these fine apples and pears, ride on these nice horses, and play with these children?' And the man answered, 'If he loves to say his prayers, if he is fond of his book and is good, then he may come into the garden, and your other children also; and if they all come together they shall have fifes, trumpets, lutes, and all sorts of stringed instruments, and they shall dance and shoot with little bows and arrows.'

"And then he showed me a fine lawn, in the midst of the garden, ready for a dance; and there were hanging on the trees golden fifes, trumpets, and silver bows. But it was very early, and the children had not finished their breakfast, therefore I could not wait for the dance; but I said to the man, 'Dear Sir, I will go immediately and write about all these things to my little son John, that he may attend to his prayers, and learn his book well and be good, and so may come to this garden; but he has a nurse that he must bring with him.' Then said the man, 'It shall be as you say; go and write to your son.'

"Therefore, dear little Johnny, study and pray with a good heart, and tell your little brothers to do the

same, and so you will all come together to the garden. And now I commend you to Almighty God. Greet your nurse and give her a kiss for me.

“Your affectionate father,

“MARTIN LUTHER.”

The other was addressed to his friends at Augsburg :
“Grace and peace in Christ.

“Dear gentlemen and friends,

“I have received all your letters, and understand by them how things are going on with you. That you may know in return how things fare with us, I have thought best to inform you that we, namely, myself, Vitus, and Cyriacus, are not gone to the Imperial Diet at Augsburg, but that we are come, however, to another diet.

“There is a thicket just before our window, in which the crows and rooks have assembled a diet ; and there is such a journeying to and fro, and such an incessant screaming day and night, as if they were all drunk ; they caw all together, young and old, till I wonder how their voice and breath can hold out so long. And I would gladly know if such noblemen and knights-errant are to be found likewise with you ; for it appears to me that they must have gathered together here from all parts of the world.

“I have not yet seen their emperor ; but their noble and great personages are continually hovering and flying about before our eyes, not very splendidly attired, but simply, in uniform, all equally black, and all with the same grey eyes ; they all sing the same song, yet with a pleasant difference between young and old, great and small. They care not for large halls and palaces ; for their hall is roofed by the beautiful wide-spreading sky, its floor is the simple turf, its tables are pretty green branches, and its walls are as wide as the world’s end.

Neither do they ask for horses and harness; they have winged wheels, with which they escape from the guns and retire to a place of safety.

"They are great and powerful lords, but I do not yet know their decrees. Thus much, however, I have learnt from an interpreter—that they are projecting a vigorous attack upon the wheat, barley, oats, rye, and all sorts of corn and grain, and that there are many knights among them who are to perform great feats.

"Thus you see we sit here in the midst of the diet, witnessing with great delight and affection the cheerful singing and merry lives of the princes, nobles, and chief men of the kingdom. But we have particular pleasure in watching them sharpen their bills and put on their armour, that they may be victorious and acquire honour in their contests with corn and malt. We wish them safety and success, and trust that they will be impaled altogether on some sharp-pointed hedge.

"I think, however, that the crowd before me can be nothing but sophists and papists, with their preachers and scribes, who have come that I may hear their harmonious voices and preaching, and may see what very useful people they are to destroy everything upon earth, and then yawn for something to do.

"To-day we have heard the first nightingale; for they have not been willing to trust themselves to April. It is now very fine weather with us; it has not rained at all except a little yesterday. Perhaps it will be otherwise with you. I now say farewell, and commend you to the good providence of God.

"From the Diet of Grain-peckers, 28th of April, 1530."*

* "An seine Tischgesellen. . . . Aus dem Reichstag der Malztürken." He was fond of the subject. On April 22 he wrote to J. Jonas: "Ex volucrum, præsertim monedularum regno. . . . Sedemus tandem hic

In a letter to Spalatin, written a few days afterwards in the same tone, he condescended to play upon the word *monedula*, or rook: "Yet, if these birds could find a fair interpreter, they would take great glory and pride from their very name *monedula*, which means, no doubt, man-edel, or by inversion edel-man; except that this might indeed cast some little slur on your comitia, where your edelmen practise in somewhat too great perfection the monedular virtue. Yet our mondulins, in their diet, have one great advantage, that they have a much cheaper and more agreeable forum than yours will have at Augsburg.

"But enough of jesting. Yet is it in seriousness and by compulsion that I jest; that I may repel the reflections which rush in upon me, if indeed I may repel them. . . ."

inter nubila, vereque in volucrum regno. Nam ut cæteras aves taceam, quarum est tanta confusio cantuum, ut tempestatem superent, ipsæ monedulæ seu corvi recta e prospectu nostro nemus quoddam occupant totum. Ich meine da sey ein gekekte ab hora quarta mane toto die indefatigabiliter. . . . Ego interpretor eos esse totum exercitum Sophistarum et Cochlæitarum. . . ." His letter to Spalatin contains some of the same expressions with that to his Tischgesellen: "*Hic videas magnanimos Reges, Duces, Proceresque alios . . . indefatigabili voce decreta et dogmata sua per aerem jactantes. Denique non in aulicis istis speluncis et antris, quæ vos palatia dicitis, versantur sive clauduntur potius, verum sub divo, ut quibus ipsum cælum sit laquear et virentes arbores varium liberrimumque pavementum. Porro parietes idem qui et fines terræ, &c. . . .*"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

FROM THE DIET OF AUGSBURG TO THE TRUCE OF
RATISBON.

General expectation of civil war—election of Ferdinand to be king of the Romans—resisted by the Protestants—the league of Smalcald—on what grounds it was approved by Luther—his letter to Link—the articles of Smalcald—parties to the league—replies of the kings of England, Denmark, and France—further meetings of the confederacy—proposal to admit into it the Swiss Reformers—negotiations of Bucer—letters of Luther on this subject—Charles and the Pope deliberate about the council—the evasions of the latter—the progress of the Turks a new reason for union among the Germans—Charles treats with the Protestants—conference at Schweinfurt—resistance and claims of the Protestants—division among them respecting the admission of future members to the advantages of the pending treaty—opinions of Urbanus Rhegius, Luther and Melancthon—remarks of the Landgrave on the two last—the difference settled by mediation—the negotiations are resumed at Nuremberg—the treaty is signed there and ratified by the Emperor at Ratisbon—highly favourable to the Reformation.

At the dissolution of the Diet of Augsburg there was only one expectation throughout all Germany, that of a fierce and immediate civil war.* The Pope and his court, and all his Italian adherents, were thirsting for that consummation. There may have been some even among the German prelates who desired it. And had Charles been deliberately disposed to wash away the

* Luther wrote to Gerbellius (No. 1391) in June, 1531: "Ego cum meis admiro Dei miracula et gratias ago, qui tam horrendas minas commotionum in ludibrium vertit, et tanta pace fruamur contra omnium spem. Nam certissimi erant omnes hac ætate et vere jam elapso bellum atrocissimum fore in Germania."

heresy in the blood of his subjects, the crisis was not unfavourable; for the French on the one side were humbled and exhausted, and on the other the arms of Solymán had sustained a severe reverse. There was scarcely a moment in his whole reign in which he could have acted against a domestic enemy with greater effect, had he chosen to act instantly. But he had other projects in view: and his familiar communications with the Protestants during five months of constant negotiation had taught him that they were not the turbulent enthusiasts represented to him; that their religious opinions had no savour of fanaticism; that their civil and political principles had no tendency to social insubordination; that in numbers they were not contemptible; that in zeal and constancy they were truly powerful and formidable.

Meanwhile, they on their part, not dejected by the menacing proclamation of the Diet, and gathering fresh courage from the religious exhortations of Luther, resolved to prepare without any loss of time for the worst extremities. As early as the 22nd of December they assembled at Smalcald, a small city, then subject to the joint rule of the Landgrave of Hesse and the Prince of Hennenberg, and signed on the 31st* a provisional treaty for their mutual defence. Among other matters it was agreed to oppose a political project on which the Emperor was then bent. He was desirous that his brother Ferdinand should be elected king of the Romans: the choice would be honourable to his family, and it would secure during his own frequent absence a resident master of the empire in whom he could entirely trust. The Protestants objected to the choice; through experience

* At least the form of the convention bears that date. (Seck., l. iii. sect. 1, § i.) The signatures were officially attached to it on Jan. 4, 1531.

been, that no degree of religious peril or oppression authorised a forcible resistance to the Emperor,* and that the Lord would assuredly provide for the defence of His own work. In excuse for this seeming inconsistency it has been pretended that, after the partial edict of Augsburg, Charles appeared no longer as the head of the empire, but as the chief of a faction. But the reason more generally assigned is this—before the signature of the treaty of Smalcald the jurists were consulted, as well as the divines, respecting its legality; and when Luther would have advanced his ancient scruples, he was assured by the former, that there were certain cases in which the laws permitted resistance to the imperial authority. He confessed his ignorance of any such license;† but being now persuaded that this was so, and considering that the gospel did in no respect abolish or invalidate

* Seckendorf admits this, even while he excuses the inconsistency of Luther.—l. iii. s. 2, § iv. Still the question was warmly discussed. On the one side it was argued, that it was the duty of the magistrates to defend their subjects; that Moses, the Judges, David, the Maccabees, had formed leagues and fought battles; that not to resist the sins of others was to share in them; that the worship of God was of more weight than civil obedience; that notorious injuries and violence released men from allegiance; that the Emperor was a constitutional monarch; that the empire was an aristocracy rather than a despotism; that the tyranny of the Emperor in this case extended to the soul, and therefore was more pernicious than that of the Turk. On the other side it was pleaded, that civil authority was not to be resisted; that vengeance belonged unto God; that the Electors, though magistrates to their subjects, were subjects to the Emperor; that it was the duty of Christians to profess and to suffer; that refusal of obedience was one thing, resistance to authority another; that Moses and the others acted by a special commission from God; that to suffer was not to permit; that the hopes of Christians were to be placed in silence and resignation. Some of these reasons indicate a close connexion between the principles of religious and political independence. See Scultet., *Annal. Evangel. Renov. ann. 1531.*

† Sleidan, lib. viii. f. 122.

civil institutions, he fell at once into the conclusion, that whatever was agreeable to the latter could scarcely be repugnant to the ordinances of God.

His own explanation, as confidentially addressed to Link at the moment,* was this: "You lately inquired whether it were true that I had counselled resistance to the Emperor? I have given no such counsel. But since there were some who maintained that this was not a question for the determination of the divines, but of the jurists, and since the jurists authorised the resistance, I said on my own behalf, 'I advise as a theologian; but if the jurists can show that such is consistent with their laws, I would allow them to act according to their laws. Let them see to that: for if the Emperor has ordained in his own statutes that in this case he may be legally resisted, let him abide by the law which he has enacted; only let me neither advise nor decide concerning that law, but confine myself to my own theology.' " Then, after drawing some distinction as to the opposition which might be offered to a prince, as a prince or as a Christian, and expressing a holy trust in God, the writer concluded, that, if it should be decided to resist, on the grounds proposed by the lawyers, it was no affair of his.—"So let them do. I am free."

The articles of Smalcald, of December 1530, received the general assent of the great majority of those who had subscribed the Confession. They were to the following effect: That the Emperor should be required to cause

* On January 15, 1531. "Si Cæsar hoc statuit in suis legibus, ut in hoc casu liceat sibi resisti, patiatur legem quam tulit—modo ego non consulam aut judicem de ista ipsa lege, sed maneam in mea theologia So lass ich sie machen. Ego sum liber."

There is also a letter to Lazarus Spenzler, of Feb. 15, to the same effect; and another, "An einen Bürger zu Nürnberg," of the 18th of March following.

all actions, on matters relating to the Reformation, commenced by the fiscal advocate, to cease forthwith ; that, if any unjust demand should be made upon any of the confederates, either by the Treasury or the Swabian League, or any other party, under pretence of religion, all the others should contribute counsel and assistance ; that the allies should commission certain learned divines and jurists to compose an uniform order of ecclesiastical rites, in order to avoid the reproach, that every district and parish professed an independent worship ; that the same should establish a form of discipline for the correction of public offences, as well as for the coercion of the Anabaptists ; that an appeal from the decree of Augsburg should be composed ; that an apology should be published, in Latin, German, and French, embracing and defending all the questions of religion and acts of the confederates, and communicated to various sovereigns, especially those of France, Denmark, and England ; and to several cities, especially the maritime cities of the north of Germany ; and that the Emperor should be exhorted to insist on the convocation of an impartial and evangelical council. It was subjoined in conclusion, that the above articles should be represented as the unanimous manifesto of the Protestant party.* There were present the Elector and the Landgrave ; Ernest Duke of Brunswick ; Wolfgang Prince of Anhalt ; Gerhard and Albert Counts of Mansfeld ; and the deputies from Strasburg, Nuremberg, Ulm, Magdeburg, Constance, Bremen, Reutlingen, Heilbrun, Memmingen, Lindau, Kempten, Isne, Bibrach, Windesheim, and Wessenberg ; and, though some of the deputies had not authority to add their signatures to the convention, there was no dispute on any of the terms contained

* Seckendorf, lib. iii. sec. 1, § 1.

in it. The Landgrave, who had just concluded a religious league for six years with the cantons of Zurich, Berne, and Basle, and the city of Strasburg, had invited the Swiss to send representatives to Smalcald. But he could not succeed in including them in the confederacy.

The King of England was at that moment so occupied by domestic intrigues, that he could take little interest in the ecclesiastical broils of Germany; and though he bore no good will either to the Emperor or to the Pope, yet, as the affair of the divorce was still pending, it was not politic to give decided offence to either. The King of Denmark replied, that he was earnestly attached to the cause of the Gospel, but that his exertions were counteracted and overruled by the bishops of his kingdom, whose family connexions and feudal authority gave them irresistible influence; that for this reason he was unable to engage in the confederacy as King of Denmark, though he consented to do so as lord of certain estates and provinces in the German empire. But Francis turned a readier ear to overtures which promised to throw dissension among the subjects of his great antagonist. He immediately promised his support—not indeed for the maintenance of religious error, but in defence of the privileges of the empire, violated by the election of Ferdinand. To give effect to that promise, he despatched the most accomplished of his diplomatists, William de Bellay, into Germany, instructed to irritate the civil insubordination of the Reformers, while he blamed their ecclesiastical contumacy; and to conclude with them a treaty, such as might neither give umbrage to the Pope, nor infringe in any way on the articles of Cambray. It was concluded at Eslingen. The only object professed in it was the protection of the Germanic body in all its actual rights against every usurpation;

and a hundred thousand crowns were deposited by Francis with the Duke of Bavaria, to be employed, should it become necessary, for that purpose and for that only.

On the 29th of March (1531) the confederates opened their second assembly at Smalcald. Some new members were added to their number. Regulations were made for the levying of supplies and soldiers to be ready in case of need ; for the choice of officers and commanders ; for the further extension of their league, and the protection by constitutional methods of those who might determine to join it. On this occasion they received the Emperor's commands to furnish their contingent without excuse or delay towards the Turkish war, by which Germany was then threatened. But they replied with reason, that before assistance was required peace should be granted them, and that it would not be wise in them to place their means of self-defence at the disposal of their persecutors : accordingly they required, that the hostile proceedings of the imperial Chamber* should be stopped. It was difficult for Charles at once to make this concession ; as it would have amounted to a virtual repeal of the Recess of Augsburg.

The Protestants adjourned their assembly to the 4th of June, at Francfort. They received in that interval a letter from Henry VIII., expressing the most friendly feelings towards themselves and their cause ; applauding their resolution to remove the abuses of the Church ; accepting their explanations as to the opinions calumniously imputed to them ; avowing his earnest desire for the immediate convocation of a council ; and promising

* This was the permanent executive council of the empire. It was instituted by Maximilian, and consisted of a president and sixteen judges. It possessed too a judicial character, deciding questions of civil right among the members of the Germanic body, and passing judgment in extreme resort.

his mediation with the Emperor in their behalf. These were flattering expressions, but they were nothing more. They did not compromise the writer to any act of support or sympathy ; and they were accepted at no more than their real value by the sagacious men to whom they were addressed.

The meeting at Francfort was attended by deputies from Lubeck, Brunswick and Göttingen, in addition to most of those who were present on the first occasion. The allies firmly remonstrated against the unconstitutional election of Ferdinand ; and showed, at the same time, their resolution to resist every attack on their religious liberties. To the former boldness they were undoubtedly encouraged by their treaty with Francis. Besides, there was much good policy in the combination of those two questions. Among the many who thought them wrong on the second, there might be some who would respect their opposition to a political encroachment. And should they be attacked on the ground of spiritual insubordination, it would be easy to represent that the other was their real offence ; and thus they might hope to win support not from the King of France alone, but from the more independent even among the German Catholics.

It was on this occasion that, at the desire of the imperial cities, it was seriously proposed to admit the Swiss into the confederacy. The Saxons opposed the project ; they enlarged, as before, on the eucharistical difference, and maintained that the secular advantages of the connexion, to which they were not blind, were as nothing when compared with those terrible and indiscriminate visitations, which God might be expected to inflict upon the members of so monstrous an alliance. The Landgrave had never desisted from the pursuit of this object. Nothing discouraged by his failure at Marburg, he now

again endeavoured by somewhat different means to accomplish the same end. On this occasion he availed himself of the mediation of Bucer, than whom no man was more desirous of the concord, or gifted with more suitable powers for its attainment.

Bucer composed, in the name of the Zwinglians, a request to the Lutherans to receive them into communion. Melancthon and Brentz, on the part of the latter, declined the overture. The Landgrave then argued, that the difference was not essential; seeing that both parties believed the bodily presence, and only disagreed as to the manner of the presence—the Swiss asserting that it was by faith, the Lutherans that it was absolute and independent of faith. But Luther and Melancthon persisted that a union based on such a ground would be an insult to the truth.

Bucer rejoined: When the Zwinglians avow that they receive the body of Christ by faith, it can be none other than the true body that they receive, and that true body can be no other than the very substance of Christ; to be received it must be present: thus, according to their opinion, the body is substantially present in the Eucharist, and the whole dispute is no more than verbal. But the Saxons would not accept that interpretation: they insisted that the presence, so ingeniously devised by Bucer, was no more than imaginary, and that it did not satisfy the sense attached to the same expression by themselves. Other discussions followed with no satisfactory result; and this is not perhaps surprising: for the true question was not respecting the existence of a difference—neither party seriously doubted that*—but

* The Landgrave would have admitted the Swiss into the league unconditionally, which was obviously the only method of effecting a permanent concord. The Saxon view of the question was supported by the senate of Nuremberg. Scultet. Ann. 1531.

whether it were of magnitude so overwhelming as unavoidably to perpetuate a breach, amidst circumstances the most critical, between two bodies of Christians engaged by almost every other tie in the defence of a cause, which they both devoutly believed to be the cause of God.

There is a letter from Luther to Bucer, written as early as January 22 in this year, in which he returned thanks to God that so much advance had been made towards concord, since both parties now confessed that the body and blood were verily in the Supper, and presented for the nourishment of the soul; but he then expressed his surprise, that, after this concession, there should be any difficulty in admitting, that it was presented along with the bread to the mouths both of the pious and impious.* Without that confession no union was, in his mind, possible: he could admit no full and solid concord with them, unless he would offend his own conscience and even sow the seeds of much greater confusion between the churches. "Rather let us endure this lesser discord, though with less peace than we desire."† He perceived clearly the extent of the evil

* "Etiam cum pane offerri foris ori tam piorum quam impiorum." In a letter written in the following March to Justus Menius, he said, "Bucer effecit tantum, ut concedant omnes vere adesse et porrigi Corpus Domini in Cœna etiam corporali præsentia. Sed cæteri tantum *fidei* animæ ac piæ sic porrigi et adesse in cibum. Bucerus vero consentit et impiorum manu porrigi et ore sumi. Hoc enim literæ ejus clare testantur."

† "Ita feremus potius hanc discordiam minorem cum pace minore. I am convinced," he continued, "that all the gates of hell, the whole Papacy, the whole might of the Turk, all that is worldly, all that is fleshly, all that exists of evil, could not very much injure the Gospel, if only we were united." To Ernest Duke of Brunswick he wrote, That far more evil than good would arise from the reconciliation; and that it was enough if both parties would abstain from recriminations until some solid concord could be accomplished.

arising from this division, and how safe the Gospel would be from every danger if only it could be healed; yet his conscience rendered this impossible. "You will impute it to my conscience, and to the irresistible compulsion of my faith, that I decline this concord."*

Yet, from a letter written two months afterwards, to John Rauve,† it would seem that he was then better disposed to listen to the temperaments of the mediators. "I could wish, if they were really anxious for the concord, to give them all indulgence, that by the temporary endurance of their interpretations they might gradually be brought over to us, without any compromise of the opinion hitherto defended by us. Charity seems to require this. . . ." And the explanations were officially accepted.‡

The narrow limits of this charity are marked, however, only too clearly by some subsequent expressions of the writer. In the following October Zwingli perished by a violent death; and Luther, on learning this great calamity to the common cause of Christ, thus vented, in confidential communications, the immitigable bitterness of his spleen:

"This then is the second judgment of God! The first in Munzer's case, the second in Zwingli's. I was a prophet when I said that God would not long endure those rabid and furious blasphemies of which they were full, deriding our God, and calling us cannibals and blood-drinkers, and other horrid names. They would have it so!" And again: "Carlstadt is made

* "*Conscientiæ meæ et necessitati fidei meæ impetrabis, quod hanc concordiam detrecto.*"

† March 28th, 1531 (No. 1365).

‡ Sleidan, lib. viii. p. 131. Strasburg, and some cities of Swabia, subscribed to the Confession thus interpreted, but not the Swiss. Scultet. Annal. anno 1531.

Zwingle's successor at Zurich,* which Zwingle they now proclaim a martyr, that they may fill even to the brim the cup of their blasphemies till it run over. . . ." And again: "You see that Zwingle, with so many of his brother-devotees (*symmystis*), has suffered for his dogma in a somewhat horrible fashion. So Munzer perished, so Hetzer, and many others, to the end that God might manifest by these prodigies of his wrath the detestation with which He regarded those impious spirits."

Meanwhile Charles, not unfaithful to the stipulations of Augsburg, had pressed upon the Pope the convocation of a council; but Clement still hoped to avoid that extreme resource. He expressed some dissatisfaction that the Emperor had not already assumed his proper character of advocate of the church, and chastised the rebels with the sword; and doubtless he still believed that matters must speedily be brought to that issue: he put no trust whatever in any other expedient. Yet he did not reject the demand: he even professed a disposition to indulge the wishes of those who imagined that, because councils had formerly healed disorders in the church, the same remedy would be no less effectual

* This was not true. The first passage was addressed to Link, the second to Gorlitz—both on the same day, January 3, 1532—and the third to Rothman, almost a year afterwards (December 23, 1532), as if to prove the writer's implacability. Others might be added. The following is the earliest burst of his feeling. On December 28, 1531, he wrote to Amsdorf—"The Zwinglians have come to terms with the other Swiss on the most humiliating conditions, besides the ignominious defeat which they received, having so haplessly lost the chief of their dogma; but such is the end of the glory which they sought by their blasphemies on the Lord's Supper!" Is this Luther standing by the bier of Zwingle? Is this the funeral dirge chanted over the great reformer of Switzerland by the great reformer of Germany? Is this the reverence paid to the ashes of a brother and a martyr? Is it even the common forbearance exacted by decency towards a fallen foe?

then; but he was very positive as to all the conditional circumstances—the time, the place, and the mode of deciding. The time was to be regulated by political contingencies—a moment of universal peace being, of course, that most favourable to religious deliberation. The place was to be fixed in some country undisturbed by spiritual sedition, and exempt from any overruling secular influence—what other than Italy, which was indeed the heart of the Catholic world?*

The mode was to be that which was consecrated by ancient custom—that none should be admitted to vote except prelates (by right), abbots (by prescription), and any others on whom the Pope might personally confer that especial privilege. All these provisions, which it was not unreasonable in him to require, raised in fact so many insuperable impediments to the object of the Emperor.

For Charles was at that moment quite sincere in his desire for some council, which might be accepted by the Protestants. And thus his ambassadors urgently represented, that he had exhausted at Augsburg all the resources of diplomacy; that he had employed authority, menaces, caresses, every imaginable expedient; that only one alternative remained—a council or arms; and that the latter was impossible, in consequence of the danger impending from the Turks. The Pope on his side pro-

* “Come in provincia commoda e non sospetta a veruna delle nazioni, &c.” The cardinals argued, That general councils were never called but for the examination of new opinions, whereas those of Luther had been already condemned; that in the present imminent danger from the Turk and divisions of Christendom, a seditious council might take measures dangerous to the honour and integrity of the church, &c. &c.—Pallavic. lib. iii. cap. v. It was even argued, how great an advantage the Turk might gain, should he surprise the Christians occupied in the contentions of a council.—Guicciardini, lib. xx. See the following chapter.

posed, as the place for the council, Rome, Bologna, Parma, Piacenza, and whatever else was sure to be inadmissible beyond the Alps; and in such vain negotiations the greater part of the year was consumed.

Meanwhile the peril from the East became more imminent, and the position of Charles was not without perplexity. On the one side were the contumacious apostates from the church,—the common enemy of all Christendom on the other. Both were hostile, and he was unable to contend with both. In fact, he could not hope to repel the one without the positive and cordial assistance of the other. Thus it became necessary to temporise; and to Charles this was no difficult policy. Accordingly he summoned a Diet at Spire (for the 13th of September) and opened some previous negotiations with the Protestants. But the latter were far from betraying any disposition to recede from their former claims, and the Elector even notified that neither himself nor his son would attend the meeting, unless Luther were likewise permitted, under the protection of the imperial safe-conduct, to assist at the deliberations. Only a year before, the same proposal would have been considered, even by the Protestants themselves, as insulting to the Emperor.

They declared besides, that they persisted in the doctrine which they had proclaimed at Augsburg; they demanded the long-promised council; they prayed that it might be immediately assembled in Germany; they expressed their desire for a reconciliation of all differences, and asked no more than the peaceable profession of their religion until the decision of the council. The Diet was prorogued, but the Protestants assembled at Francfort in the December following, and repeated their refusal to contribute any succour against the Turkish invasion, un-

less perfect toleration were previously guaranteed to them.

The Emperor renewed his overtures, and after some correspondence it was agreed, that a conference should be held at Schweinfurt, an imperial city of Franconia, in the beginning of April (1532). The Elector of Mayence and the Prince Palatine appeared there as the agents of the Emperor under the specious title of mediators. They proposed several articles to the effect, That the Confession of Augsburg, without further innovation, or any connexion with Zwinglians or Anabaptists, should be the doctrine of the Protestants until the decision of a council ; that these should make no attempts to diffuse their tenets in the Catholic States, or to disturb the jurisdiction or ceremonies of the church ; that they should furnish supplies for the Turkish war ; that they should submit to the imperial decrees and tender their allegiance to the Emperor and to the King of the Romans.

The Protestants resisted, and the ground on which they chose to fight their battle was the elevation of Ferdinand. They refused to acknowledge its validity, and supported their refusal by plausible arguments. The princes of Bavaria had recently joined their League with the same motive which was professed by the King of France, to enforce the repeal of that election ; and thus, in a political view, there was no point on which they were so strong as that. But at the same time they put forward other demands in reply to the proposals of the mediators: That the Emperor should proclaim forthwith a general religious peace ; that the two parties should be prohibited from offering any sort of molestation or insult to each other ; that the imperial chamber should be instructed to suspend the execution of the sentences pronounced on religious matters. If these should be

accorded, they promised on their side not in any way to innovate into their Confession; not to convert or to protect the subjects of other princes; not to interfere with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in places where it was still established; to render the most zealous obedience to the Emperor; and to furnish all possible supplies for the Turkish war. Some discussions ensued, which turned chiefly on the election of the King of the Romans; and as no agreement appeared then possible, the conference was adjourned to the 3rd of the following June at Nuremberg.

The union of the confederates was threatened at this time by a difference, important both in itself and in the dissension which it occasioned, though not on any theological matter. The question was simply this: Whether such states as might subsequently adopt the Confession should be admitted to the advantages of the truce about to be concluded with the Emperor?* It was first moved in the beginning of 1532, when there was a fair promise of a religious peace, and the feelings and policy of the great majority led them at once to pronounce in the affirmative. The divines of Hesse, eight in number, were of that opinion. The Saxon Chancellor Pontanus maintained it confidently. But the Elector suspended his decision till he should have consulted his theologians. To the astonishment of all parties Luther expressed an opposite judgment, and on further consideration confirmed it.†

* "An Pax cum Cæsare concludenda esset inter eos qui tum evangelicam doctrinam receperint, exclusis qui in posterum eandem essent recepturi?" Seckend. lib. iii. s. 4, § ix. Addit. ii.

† The "Bedenken," in which Luther first pronounced his opinion, was dated April, 1532 (No. 1455). The confirmatory composition (No. 1456) is inscribed "Bestätigung des vorigen Bedenkens," and was signed conjointly with Bugenhagius. The argument was, that the question was not of sufficient importance to risk the issue of the negotiation upon

A warm debate ensued. The divines of Luxemburg espoused the more generous determination; and Urbanus Rhegius, their chief, addressed (on the 19th of June) a warm and eloquent letter to the Landgrave. He pleaded that the peace proposed to them was treacherous and more dangerous than open war; that, even should it preserve their own persons and property, it would be injurious to the Gospel by excluding others from participation in it; that the ancient Christians were never brought to renounce, through any pains of death, the right of receiving converts into their churches. "We have then our choice. If we make this peace with the Papists, our faith, our justification, and our lives will be endangered, and we shall die in our sins. If we make peace with Christ we shall be hateful to the world indeed, but we shall live by faith. We cannot do both. How then shall we decide? Let Satan rage against us; let the world war against us; let Antichrist walk abroad; only let Christ favour us, and we shall live!"

Such sentiments were worthy of the earlier years of Luther. But on this occasion he opposed to them the calculations of a selfish policy: That it was not prudent to embarrass the treaty by any unnecessary stipulations; that it was enough for the parties interested to negotiate for themselves. His reasoning was adopted by his prince, and, in spite of the general dissatisfaction, for the time prevailed. But the controversy was continued between the Elector and the Landgrave for some months afterwards and with some warmth on both sides. And in the course of the discussions the latter observed, That he did indeed consider Luther as a good man, and had

it. In other letters, written shortly afterwards, Luther expressed himself warmly in favour of the peace, and seemed afraid of losing so desirable an object. Earlier (in February) he exhorted the Elector to withdraw his protest against the election of Ferdinand with the same view.

always held his works in high estimation, but that he regarded his opinion on this matter as absolutely null, since it was not in accordance with Scripture; that in respect to Melancthon, he made still less account of him, as his trembling timidity had been made sufficiently manifest at Augsburg. As direct intercourse between the chiefs seemed rather to exasperate the dispute, some moderate persons were chosen to confer on the subject, and through their discreet mediation the feud was presently extinguished. Enough was risked by the deliberate exclusion of the Swiss from the confederacy of Smalcald. To confine it within still narrower limits, by shutting the doors against the accessions of fresh members even of the Lutheran party, would indeed have been to foster discord and multiply the chances of destruction.

The negotiations, which had been broken off at Schweinfurt, were resumed at the appointed time at Nuremberg. Meanwhile the Turks were advancing nearer to Austria, and the heart of the empire was in danger. The discussions, which promised at first the same result as before,* were thus curtailed; the arguments of the diplomatists were silenced by the march of Solyman; and the conditions proposed by the Protestants were accepted (July 23, 1532). The Emperor was awaiting the result at Ratisbon, and it is recorded that, when the treaty was at length brought to him, subscribed by the Protestant chiefs, he seized the pen with an impatience not customary to him, and, without so

* Luther to Amadorf, June 24, 1532 (No. 1460). "*De Turcæ adventa tandem certi nimium facti videmur. Præterea nihil scio novarum rerum, nisi quod nostri expectantur reduces re prorsus infecta et frustra consumptis opera, opere, tempore et aere. Fatum urget Papam et regnum ejum implacabili ira Dei. Wohlan, Wohlan! Sit sanguis super caput ipsorum. Wi haben genug gethanr.*"

much as examining the document, affixed his signature (August 2, 1532).

The articles of Nuremberg, or Ratisbon, contained the principal provisions which had been stipulated at Scheinfurt—viz., That the Protestants should enjoy perfect religious peace till the decision of a general council, to be convoked within six months; or, in failure of the council, till that of an imperial Diet; that no sort of molestation should be offered to any individual on any religious pretence; that the processes begun by the imperial chamber against the parties to this treaty should be null, as well as the sentences already passed; and that they on their side should render due obedience to the Emperor and assist him in repelling the Turkish invasion.

This was the first official act, in which the principle of religious toleration was openly acknowledged, and admitted as the basis of a political convention. And this was, perhaps, the most substantial triumph that the Reformation had yet achieved. It is indeed true that it was only a provisional agreement, and that it was extorted from Charles not by the physical power of the Protestants, still less by the moral authority of their doctrine, but solely by that strange providential dispensation, which converted the very arms of the infidel into an instrument for the revival of the Gospel.* Still it was an advantage of most essential importance. The edicts of Worms and Augsburg were now virtually suspended; and the interval of their suspension was indefinite. For, whatever period Charles might wish to prescribe, it was

* "By the tacit commandment of God the Emperor was called away from his designs against the Germans by the Turkish war. The dogs lick the sores of Lazarus. The Turk mitigates the edict of Augsburg. Canes lingunt ulcera Lazari. Turca mitigat edictum Augustanum." Melancthon to Camerarius. "No race of men," said the same, "were ever in greater peril than we were; no party was ever subjected to animosities more bitter than ourselves. There was no aid but from God."

more probable now, than at any former time, that Clement would be persuaded to convoke any council ; or if otherwise, it would be a council so purely papal as to insure its indignant rejection by the German people. And in regard to the alternative of a Diet, that was to return to an expedient which had already failed, and to re-enact the scenes of Augsburg, with some variations perhaps, but under circumstances far more favourable to the Reformers. Meanwhile their habits of religious independence would be confirmed ; and every succeeding year would make it more difficult to revoke a compulsory indulgence, which was accepted as a right. Doubtless the progress of just principles is commonly slow and against many obstacles ; but there is this compensating truth, that when a great step has once been made in that direction, it is seldom that it can be permanently recalled. There may be partial reactions, and defections to the old methods of thinking and acting ; but even these are generally modified by better influences, and take their colour from the more enlightened spirit predominant all around them.

The Protestants well fulfilled the obligation imposed on them by this treaty. The numerous and well equipped armaments with which they swelled the imperial force greatly contributed to repulse the foe, who, when he had accomplished, as it might seem, the mission of terror assigned to him from above, withdrew without inflicting, almost without attempting to inflict, any serious evil upon the empire.

CHAPTER XL.

TO THE DEATH OF CLEMENT VII.

Various opinions on the Convention of Ratisbon—indignation of the Pope—alteration of the general feeling in regard to Rome—death of the Elector of Saxony and accession of his son John Frederick—interview between the Emperor and Pope at Bologna—arguments on both sides respecting the expediency of a general council—joint mission into Germany and its fruitless negotiations with the confederates—conversion of some of the subjects of George of Saxony—interference of Luther and his dispute with the Duke—Luther's fresh and violent attack on Erasmus—various and overwhelming occupations of Luther, as apparent in his correspondence—his letter to Hieronymus Weller (note)—dispute between Link and Osiander on absolution—decided in favour of the former—judicious mediation of Luther—question as to the retaining of excommunication discreetly determined by Luther—the affair of the Duchy of Wurtemberg—Philip of Hesse restores Ulrich to the throne—prudent concession of the Emperor—intrigues and inconsistent policy of Clement—his alliance with Francis, then the ally of Philip—the treaties of Prague—the death of Clement VII.—his ambiguous reputation—general remarks on the progress of the Reformation during his pontificate.

LUTHER exulted in the Convention of Ratisbon. "Although in the late assembly at Augsburg the princes of our party seemed altogether devoured and destroyed, they are now for that very reason the more revived and free, insomuch that they have even wrought a change in the mind of the Emperor, and perceive with joy and gladness that all the hopes and efforts of the pontiff are turned into mockery. . . ."* Even the more moderate

* Luther to John, George, and Joachim, princes of Anhalt, September, 1532. (No. 1474.)

supporters of the church did not disapprove of the treaty; and observing the critical position of Charles, between the heretic and the infidel, and the necessity of making concession either to the one or the other, they applauded the resolution by which he humbled himself, for in some degree he did so, before his brother Christians and Germans.

Not such was the judgment of the Vatican. It had long been the maxim of Rome, a maxim which she was not ashamed to avow, that the worst of her enemies was a subject in rebellion; and that it was more essential to the preservation of that spiritual despotism, which she was pleased to call religion, to crush the domestic insurgent than to repel the casual invasion of the unbelieving foreigner. It was at Wittemberg, not in Hungary, that her battles were fought; and the name of Solyman had not so hateful a sound in the ears of her courtiers as the name of Luther. Her policy (I mean her ecclesiastical policy) was purely selfish; and it was for that reason that it was so invariably consistent and uniform, and so very commonly successful. Yet as Europe became more enlightened, princes began to discover that the advantage of their own subjects ought to be consulted in the government of their states, and that it was not wise to sacrifice their national independence and wealth for the aggrandisement of a city of priests, revelling in luxurious enjoyments and indifferent to every interest except their own. Such were the practical conclusions which necessarily followed from the principles of Luther; and they were frequently embraced even when the principles themselves were rejected. And thus a secret dissatisfaction with the yoke of Rome found place in the breasts of many, who sincerely repudiated the religious dogmas of the Reformation.

A fortnight after the ratification of the treaty, the

Elector of Saxony died,* at the age of sixty-two. During seven critical years he had directed with a steady hand the vessel of the Reformation; and, if inferior in penetration and sagacity to his brother and predecessor, he was not so in the honesty of his convictions and the firmness of his purpose. In doubtful cases he usually deferred to the opinion of Luther, and thus trusted perhaps to his safest guide; for if Luther did sometimes err, yet was there no man whose unbiassed judgment was so generally sound as his. At Augsburg he displayed a courage superior to the wavering of some of his theologians; and in justice to his memory we are bound to bear in mind how critical, how dangerous, during those four months, was the position which he occupied! by what a pomp of contemptuous foes he was surrounded, by what a display of authority and positive power! by what menaces his courage was tried, by what secret overtures his honesty was tempted! how free he was from every personal motive, how generously devoted to a public, and at that moment most unpromising, cause! and how he stemmed all his difficulties with a resolution so tempered by moderation as to preserve him from immediate overthrow, and ensure a certain and not very distant victory!

It is related that Charles expressed great concern when informed of the Elector's death. It may be that he had respected the years and character of a manly antagonist. It is certain that he looked with much more suspicion upon the qualities of his successor. John Frederick, the son of John, was in the flower of life, abounding in courage, fond of military adventure, warmly attached to the cause, and not less so to the person, of Luther. In fact, much intercourse had for many years taken

* Sleidan dates the Elector's death on August 13, but is corrected by his translator Courrayer, who fixes it more accurately on the 16th.

place between them. And if the prince on his side revered his ancient theologian and pastor, the light and boast of his university and his country, Luther had not been deficient in those courteous expressions of respect and deference, which pass for flattery when they are proffered to the great. Prince John was the Mæcenas of his doctrine—the rampart of his reformation—and the praise, thus lavished in some measure by anticipation, may have fostered those rising qualities which grew in due season to deserve it.

No sooner had Solyman withdrawn his forces from the Christian States, than the Emperor departed from Vienna, with little preparation and few attendants, and took the road to Italy. From Mantua he wrote to the States of the empire to acquaint them with the object of his journey, and thence proceeded to Bologna, where he arrived about the end of November. The Pope, by previous appointment, received him, and they resumed, on the spot celebrated by a former interview, their personal deliberations. On this occasion they dispensed with all formalities in their intercourse, and confined their discussions to points of interest. Yet very little resulted from the meeting. As to political matters, Charles did not succeed in dissolving the connexion then in progress between Clement and the King of France. Their ecclesiastical discussion turned for the most part on that much agitated question, the convocation of the council.

If the Edict of Augsburg did not dispose the Pope to listen favourably to the imperial exhortations, it was not likely that he should be softened by the Convention of Ratisbon. Accordingly, the same objections were urged on this as on the former occasion. It had ever been the opinion of Clement, and he had frequently expressed it even during the life of Adrian, that a council was useful

in all matters except when it went to treat about the authority of the Pope, but then that it became of all remedies the most pernicious. In the same spirit he replied to Charles in 1530: As there is no more wholesome medicine for the malady of the church than a council seasonably assembled, so is there no poison more pestilent than one celebrated in the times and amidst the circumstances which have occasioned the disorder.*

He argued besides, in regard to the council then recommended, that, whatever should be its manner of proceeding, it could not possibly produce any useful effect. If the Lutherans should be admitted to disputation, the precedent would be dangerous and the dispute vain—because they acknowledged no authority but Scripture, in such parts only as seemed to them authentic, according to the translation which seemed to them faithful, according to the interpretation which pleased their own fancies, without reverence for the wisdom of antiquity, or for the sanctity of the fathers, or for the venerable canons of the church. Luther himself had disclaimed the authority of councils; his faction did not in any sincerity raise the present clamour, but only that they might gain time by it; and finally, a decided and irreparable schism would be the consequence most probably flowing from such a council. On the other hand, if one were to be assembled avowedly for the protection of the Pope, in which the Lutherans were to be allowed no share, then would all with one voice exclaim, that it was not a free council, not a Catholic council,—and on that plea reject its decisions, and renew their appeals and remonstrances.†

* Fra Paolo Istor. Concil. Trident., l. i. ch. xxx.

† Pallavicino (lib. iii. cap. v.) refers to the Archivio Vaticano dell' Istruzioni, in which are the "Acts of Augsburg, relating to the Council of the year 1530."

These were sound irrefragable arguments;* and the only reply that the Emperor could make to them was, that the evil, as it actually stood, defied any other remedy; and that those among the German princes, who were most ardently attached to the papal interests, were desirous of the council, as affording the only remaining hope of reconciliation and concord.

In the former negotiations the Pope had proposed five conditions, as indispensable to his consent:—1. That the council should treat on no other subjects, except the Turkish war and the suppression of heresy. 2. That the presence of the Emperor should be held essential to the continuance of its deliberations. 3. That it should meet in Italy—at Rome, Bologna, Piacenza, or Mantua. 4. That those only should have votes to whom the canons gave that right. 5. That the Lutherans should petition for the Council and promise to submit to its decisions. The Emperor had replied—That it would be more satisfactory to the Protestants if the Council should be convoked without limitation, and that the Pope might afterwards prescribe the subjects of discussion; that if it were speedily summoned he would assist at it, as long as any purpose should be answered by his presence; that Mantua and Milan would be the cities in Italy most acceptable to the Germans; that the same forms and usage should be observed in this as in former councils; that the Protestants would certainly not act as

* Courrayer, in his Notes on Sleidan, justly remarks, that the sort of council demanded by the Protestants had no precedent either in Scripture or in history. In the Council of Jerusalem the Apostles were the only agents. In the earliest councils of the church the heretics were indeed heard, but there is no proof that they voted; neither did laymen, even of the highest rank, on matters of faith. So that, when the Protestants wished to take from the Pope and his bishops the right of decision in the council, and transfer it to their own theologians, they had no more in view an impartial determination than their opponents.

the Pope required of them, but that this was not necessary, since the Council would be convoked against them.

The consultations at Bologna turned on the same points, and the parties at length arrived at two conclusions: That they should respectively despatch a nuncio and an ambassador to Germany, who should act together and treat conjointly with the sovereigns of that country; that the Pope should write to Ferdinand and the States of the empire to announce his intention of convoking forthwith an œcumenical council, and to solicit the concurrence of all Christian princes in accepting it. The consistory was indeed consulted previously to any final agreement, whether there would not be some humiliation in making such advances to the Elector of Saxony. But it was decided that it was charitable to attempt the peaceful conversion of heretics, before an appeal was made to the sword; and that the Vicar of Christ Jesus should ever carry in his heart the example of his Saviour, who conversed even with publicans and sinners, that He might bring them to repentance. Accordingly the Pope, though not without reluctance, appointed a nuncio for that purpose, Hugo Rangoni, bishop of Reggio.

The Emperor then departed, dissatisfied with the dispositions and suspecting the designs of his spiritual ally; and passing through Milan and Genoa set sail for Spain and landed at Barcelona on the 8th of April, 1533. It is not unimportant to note this, since the periods of his absence from Germany were the most favourable to the progress of the Reformation.

The Pope observed his engagement and immediately sent Rangoni, accompanied by Lambert Brieres on the Emperor's part, on his mission into Saxony. The Elector was at Weimar, where he received them. The nuncio represented, in the usual phraseology, the ardent desire of the Pope to terminate the differences by peaceful

methods, and the delight with which he co-operated with the Emperor for the convocation of a council. He then proceeded to explain the sort of council which Clement proposed, and expressed his hope that all parties would previously consent to accept it; otherwise, he observed, the other princes of Christendom would be justified in enforcing its decrees against the disobedient, and maintaining the authority of the church. The ambassador took little share in this discussion. In fact, his master was very indifferent as to the conditions on which the council should be assembled, provided that either the Lutherans would submit to its decisions and thus restore what he most desired—the unity of the empire; or, should they refuse, that they would at least place themselves in so small a minority, as to make it no longer difficult to crush them.

John Frederick, after some consideration, replied, that before he could give any definite assent to these proposals, he must consult his confederates; and, as a meeting was to be held at Smalcald on the 24th of the following June, that they would then deliberate on the subject and communicate their official resolutions. The nuncio did not object to this delay; for the Pope was no more anxious for the council than the Protestants, and the one was as well pleased to temporise as the other. In fact, the clamour of the latter, though decidedly supported by public opinion in Germany, would scarcely have been so loudly raised, had they not penetrated the secret resolve of Clement; and one of the circumstances, which tended to make that clamour popular, was the terror which it was known to inspire at Rome.*

* Ranke (v. i. b. iii.) cites an anonymous letter to the Archbishop Pimpinello, in which it is mentioned, "that the price of the offices at Rome fell so much on the mere rumour of a council, that no money could be

The allies returned (on the 30th of June) the sort of answer which was probably foreseen : That no pacific offices would be of any avail unless the council were held in Germany, where the disputes had arisen ; that the truth must be decided by the test of Scripture, not by the decrees of the Pope, or the doctrines of the scholastics ; that such were the councils of the primitive church, wherein no deference was paid to human traditions or to the ordinances of the see of Rome ; that in a council, such as that proposed by Clement, the accuser would be at the same time the judge ; that they, notwithstanding, if their presence should be thought useful, would not refuse to attend, but that they would render obedience to no papal demands or decrees which were not confirmed by the Diets of the Empire. In conclusion they conjured the Emperor to set bounds to that rapacious despotism, which had so long flourished on the calamities of the innocent. This manifesto, containing these and other less important declarations, they were not contented to deliver to the two ambassadors, but they published it at the same time for the information of all the Christian world. Clement, not well pleased with the result of this mission, chose to ascribe it to the indiscretion of his nuncio. He recalled Rangoni on pretence of his age and infirmity, and appointed Peter Paul Vergerio, then nuncio at the court of Ferdinand, in his place.

Early in the year 1532 Duke George of Saxony found reason to suspect some of his subjects of inclination to the Lutheran tenets ; and it appeared that there were some citizens of Leipzig who refused the papal communion, and passing the frontiers to a neighbouring village,

got for them. *Gli affizii solo con la fama del Concilio son invilili tanto, chi non sene trovano danari."*

in the dominions of the Elector, there received the sacrament in both kinds. The Duke took measures to ascertain the persons of the offenders, and prohibited that proceeding. They appealed to Luther for advice, and he replied in a letter "To the Evangelical Christians of Leipzig," April 11, to the effect: That those, who believed from their hearts that the double communion was essential to their salvation, ought rather to submit to any inflictions than to violate their conscience. This was well; but not thus contented, he launched forth some severe censures against the Prince, after his ancient fashion. This communication produced its effect; the malcontents were contumacious, and the Duke without hesitation sent them into exile.

He then addressed to the Elector a formal and indignant complaint against the seditious interference of Luther, as tending at once to raise contempt against himself and rebellion amongst his subjects. Luther replied with confidence, that in advising the persecuted to submit to punishment he did not excite them to rebellion; that he had defined in various writings the limits of civil obedience so clearly, and supported his principles by arguments so solid, that a subject hitherto clouded by the dark influence of Rome was now universally understood, and his own opinions altogether cleared from the imputation of sedition. Cochläus replied on the part of his patron with great warmth. But a reconciliation was effected between the princes by other means; and it was prudently stipulated that they should respectively prevent their divines from introducing into their disputes the names of their sovereigns. On the 4th of the following October Luther addressed to the evangelical exiles an epistle abounding with religious courage and consolation.

George of Saxony was not the only one among his old antagonists, against whom the bitterness of Luther was at

this time revived. He assailed Erasmus with even fiercer fury. In the course of February, 1534, he gave loose, in a letter to Amsdorf, to the following expressions: "At one time I used to impute to him extraordinary thoughtlessness and vanity of speech, so negligent seemed his treatment of sacred matters, and so I pushed and roused him like a man asleep, to excite him to livelier disputation and action. But now I assent to your opinion that it was not inconsiderateness, but in truth, as you say, ignorance and malice. He has lately published among other matters a catechism, composed with an artfulness truly Satanical; and he thinks by this very astute device to prejudice the youth of Christendom, and to embue it with his poisons.* He complains that it is a terrible affliction to him that he is taken for a Lutheran. For, as Christ lives, they do offer him a great injury, and it is for me to defend him against those enemies of his who call him Lutheran; since, to my certain knowledge and by my faithful evidence, he is no Lutheran, nor anything like a Lutheran, but nothing more than Erasmus. . . I for my part could wish that he were altogether exploded from our schools; for even though he were not pernicious, yet is he nothing useful: he teaches nothing, he treats of nothing. Nor is it expedient to accustom the Christian youth to this Erasmian diction; for they will learn from it to handle no subject with seriousness and gravity, either of speech or thought. And through this

* The Arian imputation is repeated in these terms: "*Recte Carpen-
sis ille, quisquis fuit, eum reprehendit, tanquam fautorem Arianorum in
Præfatione Hilarii, ubi scripserat—nos audemus Spiritum Sanctum ap-
pellare Deum, quod veteres ausi non sunt. Lege eum locum et observa mihi
Diabolum incarnatum. Hic locus fecit, ut ego Erasmo non credam,
etiamsi confiteatur assertis verbis, Christum esse Deum; sed dicam illud
Chrysippi sophisma: Si mentiris, etiam quod verum dicis mentiris . . .
At noster Rex Amphibolus sedet in Throno Amphibologiæ securus, et
duplici, &c.*"

levity and vanity they will gradually lose their feeling for religion.”* Again, writing to the same Amsdorf, on the 28th of the following June (No. 1590), Luther advised him, in his controversy, to overlook the inferior swarm† who were defending Erasmus, and to confine his attacks to the principal—“for it is better that letters should perish than religion, if letters be resolved not to serve religion but to trample her under foot.”

A still more envenomed condemnation, proving still more clearly the depth of the feeling whence these hostile acts proceeded, is contained, where one would least expect to find it, in a few short lines addressed by him to his son John, then about six years of age: “Erasmus, the enemy of every religion and the singular foe of Christ, the perfect copy and idea of Epicurus and Lucian. I, Martin Luther, write this with my own hand to you my dearest son John, and through you to all my children and to all those of the holy church of Christ. Lay up this in the very bottom of your heart, for it is no small matter.” And this was the whole communication.‡

When we examine the correspondence of Luther during this period and perceive the variety and mass

* This was the attack to which Erasmus replied in his letter “*Adversus Calumniosissimam D. M. L. Epistolam*,” mentioned in a former chapter.

† Luther, in the above letter of February, 1534, boasts of the number of hostile tracts which he had himself extinguished by his silence. “*Nosti quam soleam hoc genus scriptorum silendo et contemnendo vincere. Quot enim libros Eccii, Fabri, Emseri, Cochläi et aliorum plurimorum, qui videbantur velut montes parturire, . . . ipse meo silentio sic delevi, ut nulla eorum extet memoria. . . .*”

‡ “*Erasmus, hostis omnium religionum et inimicus singularis Christi, Epicuri Lucianique perfectum exemplar et idea. Manu mea propria ego Martinus Lutherus tibi filio meo charissimo Johanni et per te omnibus liberis et meis et Sanctæ Ecclesiæ Christi. Sensibus hæc imis, res est non parva, reponas.*” The letter is without date, but De Wette refers it to the end of 1533 (No. 1554.)

of affairs which perpetually occupied him,* we are disposed to wonder, how he found so much time and energy to bestow on matters not necessarily forced upon him; why he sought to revive an expiring controversy, when every day presented some fresh claim on his leisure, and raised up some new circumstance requiring his immediate attention. Sometimes we find him prescribing statutes for the general regulation of his churches, which prove the vigilance and also the wisdom of his superintendence; sometimes, delivering instructions for the particular guidance of their pastors and ministers. There are letters relating to many important points of ceremony, practice and doctrine, such as the communion of the sick, the administration of private baptism on occasions of necessity. There are letters relating to visitations, letters of ordination,† letters of recommendation of priests and of schoolmasters—for Luther never forgot how closely the progress of education was connected with the stability of his religious edifice, and how the principles of his reformation were especially addressed to the

* In the very letter of aggression on Erasmus he says: “*Sum satis occupatus nostris docendis, confirmandis, corrigendis, gubernandis. Deinde solum onus illud vertendi Biblia nos totos sibi vindicat; a quibus operibus Satan me forte tentat avocare, sicut antea fecit, ut meliora deserens frustra secter nubes et inania.*”

† The following was the form of ordination, as described by Luther in a letter to Myconius of December, 1535. “*Remittimus vestrum Johannem per vos vocatum et electum, per nos quoque examinatum et publice coram nostra Ecclesia inter orationem et laudes Dei in vestrum comministerium ordinatum, confirmatum, ad mandatum Principis nostri Licet D. Pomeranus non satis facilis ad hoc fuerit, ut qui adhuc sentit, quemlibet in Ecclesia sua ordinandum per suos Presbyteros. Quod fiet tandem ubi ista res nova et ordinatio altius radices egerit et mos firmior factus fuerit.*” By an Ordinations-zeugnitz delivered on October 7, 1531, by Luther to one Stizelius (Luther's Letters, No. 1780) it appears that the orthodoxy of the candidate and his abhorrence of all fanatical opinions were previously ascertained.

young. Neither, along with this, did he overlook the temporal interests of his teachers, as there are several among his epistles relating to their salaries and stipends.

Intermingled with all these are very numerous letters of consolation—some addressed by him to persons suffering under religious persecution, or any public, or local calamity; while others were merely intended to soothe the pangs of private affliction, in disappointment, in sickness,* under any domestic loss, of a wife or a child; in the visitations of melancholy, or of those inward spiritual combats, which no man ever waged with more convulsive struggles than himself.†

* Among these is a long letter addressed to his mother on her death-bed, replete with scriptural comfort and exhortation. It is dated May 20, 1531. (No. 1379.)

† In this class of letters there is one of great singularity addressed to Hieronymus Weller, on Nov. 6, 1530:—"You may feel sure that this temptation of yours is of the devil, and that you are thus vexed because you have faith in Christ; for you see how secure and joyous he leaves some, who are the most inveterate enemies of the gospel, as Eck, for instance, Zwingle, and some others. It is absolutely necessary that all we who are christians should have the devil for our adversary, and foe . . . This devil is conquered by trifling with him and contemning him, not by resistance and dispute. You must, therefore, joke and sport with my wife and with others. . . . When I first entered the monastery it fell out that I was always sad and melancholy, nor could I cast off that sadness. Wherefore I consulted Dr. Staupitz, and unfolded to him what dreadful and horrible thoughts I had. 'Thou knowest not, Martin, how useful is that temptation to thee, and how necessary' As often then, as the devil shall afflict you with those thoughts, fly at once to society, or drink more than usual, or jest and trifle, or perform some other act of cheerfulness. For it is occasionally proper to drink abundantly, to jest and trifle, and so commit some sin or other, in hatred and contempt of the devil, and that we may leave him no opening to make us overscrupulous about matters absolutely insignificant. . . . Wherefore, if the devil should say to you, 'Don't drink a drop!' do you take care and answer him, 'Nay, for that very reason, because you prohibit it, I will drink plentifully, ay, in the name of Christ Jesus, I will drink copiously. . . .' Quoties istis cogitationibus te vexaverit Diabolus, illico quære confabulationem hominum,

Many cases of conscience were likewise brought under his consideration; indeed, it was natural in the then unsettled condition of moral as well as religious principles, which were in transition from an ancient into a new and more expanded shape, that the hand which had ostensibly occasioned the change should be expected to regulate its operation. Thus many questions of marriage and divorce were submitted to his decision; and among them the great question of the age, the divorce of Henry VIII. And there is extant a very long letter from him to Robert Barnes, dated September 5, 1531, on that subject. And besides all these, we find numerous epistles on less important matters, thanks for presents, petitions for individuals, and all the little topics of ordinary correspondence.

His many letters of recommendation would prove, if proof were necessary, the great extent of his influence; the conciliatory spirit in which others were written, show to what beneficent purposes that influence was directed. And as the crown of these various labours he was frequently called upon to remove the political scruples of the great, and to solve, by his predominant judgment, the perplexities of kings and princes. And this for the reason just mentioned—because the maxims of former

aut largius bibe, aut jocare, nugare, aut aliquid aliud hilarius facito. Est nonnunquam largius bibendum, ludendum, nugandum, atque adeo peccatum aliquod faciendum in odium et contemptum diaboli, nequid loci relinquamus illi, ut conscientiam sibi faciat de rebus levissimis . . . Proinde, si quando dixerit diabolus: Noli bibere; tu sic fac illi respondeas: Atqui ob eam causam maxime bibam quod tu prohibes, atque adeo largius in nomine J. Christi bibam. . . ." This sounds strange, and has given occasion to scandal. Yet in the language of a more modern age, and of ordinary mortals, it only means:—"Be not enslaved to small religious scruples and melancholy fancies, vexing yourself about the most insignificant trifles: but battle boldly against them—fly to society; have recourse to conviviality, rather than sink beneath such notions."

ages were overthrown and prostrate, because no better code was yet established in their place, and because, during this interregnum of principles, the man, who was the visible author of the revolution, became the dictator, in matters of political, as well as religious and moral, casuistry.

Yet in the midst of all these affairs, Luther never lost sight of his constant and most important occupation, the interpretation of Scripture. Among his letters there is one, of February, 1532, addressed to Weit Dietrich, in which he writes:—"I am meditating a Preface to the Prophets, but my health impedes me. Every day before dinner I am afflicted to death with dizziness and the vexation of Satan, so as almost to despair of my life, and of ever returning to you. After dinner I console the Prince or some one else. My head will work no more. . ." Those bodily infirmities, of which we read so many complaints from the time of his Patmos even to the end of his life,* serve only to augment our astonishment at the indefatigable energy of his mind.

The ecclesiastical questions which were referred to his decision were sometimes very delicate in themselves, or connected with delicate circumstances. In the course of 1533 a serious dissension arose at Nuremberg between two reformers of considerable distinction, on the subject of absolution: Link and Osiander maintained opposite opinions as to the retention of that power, and the public

* He suffered much at Coburg:—"Jam violentius et pertinacius caput meum oppressit et vexavit tinnitus seu bombus potius ventorum turbini similis." So he wrote on September 23 to Cordatus. Four months afterwards (Jan. 15, 1531), we find him explaining the cause of this indisposition in a letter to Link:—"The confusion in my head, which I contracted at Coburg through the use of old wine, has not yet yielded to the Wittemberg beer. So I work sparingly, &c. Morbum capitis Coburgæ contractum a veteri vino nondum vicit cerevisia Wittembergensis. . . ."

or private exercise of it by the ministers of the Protestant churches. The people were similarly divided; and the dispute acquired some importance. On the 18th of April, Luther and Melancthon addressed a joint "Consideration" (Bedenken) to the senate of Nuremberg, detailing various reasons for not rejecting public absolution; and again, on July 20, the former endeavoured, by a second interference, to reconcile the difference. On the 8th of October a sort of conference took place between the four theologians, with the addition of Caspar Cruciger, on the same subject; and this was followed by other letters of Luther, both to Link and Osiander, composed with much good sense, and in the purest spirit of forbearance and conciliation,* in which he exhorted them to retain the practice, until the time for a temperate decision of the question should arrive; and above all to take heed, lest the spark just kindled at Nuremberg should break out into a general conflagration among the Evangelical churches.

Another question, which arose at the same time, he treated with the same judicious moderation. The theologians of Hesse, already sensible how much influence over the people was conferred by the power of excommunication, deliberated on restoring it to their churches.

* These documents are respectively numbered 1512, 1530, 1531, 1541, 1542. The letter of July 20 (No. 1531), is to Link, admitting some fault in Osiander, but exhorting him to treat the latter with forbearance, as a fallen antagonist. "*Vos statis et erecti estis, ille lapsus est et jacet. Quid juvat exultare et plaudere de ejus casu? . . .*" On October 8, he wrote to both and to the same effect: "*Interim tu, Osiander, ut hactenus, in tua ecclesia non graveris usu absolutionis publicæ; rursus illi suam sententiam apud se retineant, et, ut hactenus, utantur ista absolutione, donec animis pacatis et priore pace firmata, sine animorum offensione de hac re statuere liceat . . . at connitere, ut ista scintilla apud vos sopiatur, ne incendium crescat, quo nos simul corripiamur. . . .*" Both parties pleaded "conscience" in excuse for their pertinacity.

Luther was, of course, consulted. "This," he replied in substance, "is my advice :—That you make your first steps gradually and insensibly, as we do here, by repelling from the sacrament of the Eucharist those who seem to deserve excommunication. This is the true, which they call the minor, excommunication: the major, or political excommunication, is by no means to be attempted; first, because it is not in our power to execute it . . . next, because it is not in accordance with the spirit of this age; and the endeavour to re-establish it being above our strength, would occasion nothing but ridicule. The civil interference would be required to enforce it. It is not certain that the Prince would consent to this, nor in any case should I desire that the civil power should interpose in that office, but rather that it should be altogether separate; to the end that a real and clear distinction may be established between the two authorities. . . ."*

An affair, in its origin purely political, which occurred at this period, so terminated as to make no contemptible addition to the strength of the Reformers. In the year 1519, Ulrich, Duke of Wurtemberg, gave offence to the League of Swabia, by the seizure of an imperial city, Roteling, a member of the league, and was immediately deprived of his dominions. These were in the first instance occupied by the Emperor, but were afterwards placed under the sceptre of Ferdinand. The exiled Prince was nearly related to the Landgrave of Hesse, and the latter made great exertions in his favor at the Diet of Augsburg, and gained many of the members to his party. But he was overruled by Charles, who

* June 26, 1533 (No. 1525). "Nec vellem politicum magistratum in id officii misceri, sed omnibus modis separari, ut staret vera et certa distinctio utriusque magistratus."

argued in a long discourse against the justice of his demand, and publicly granted the investiture of the duchy to his brother.

The Landgrave was not thus defeated; and finding that his German friends were not prepared to yield him efficient support, he had recourse to another quarter. He opened negotiations on the subject with Francis, and even went into France to conduct them in person. The occasion was favourable, through the absence of the Emperor in Spain, and the continual and distant occupations of the King of the Romans.

Philip appeared at the court of France in the beginning of 1534, and was received with every honour—for it was then the policy of Francis to protect the League of Smalcald—and his mission was so far successful that he obtained a considerable loan, though on conditions which it was almost impossible for him to fulfil. It is needless, however, to enter into these details. The Landgrave returned. With the sums supplied by France he raised a respectable force, and after an interchange of manifestos with Ferdinand, invaded the disputed territory, and routed the army assembled for its defence. He then took possession of the whole duchy without further resistance, and reinstated Ulrich in the sovereignty.

The Emperor thundered. But a calmer consideration of his own position at the moment changed his purposes of vengeance into a disposition to conciliate the power which had struck the blow. The Landgrave, no doubt, acted in secret concert with the other Protestants, as well as under the avowed protection of Francis; and Charles prudently shrank from any step which might throw the League of Smalcald into the arms of his enemy. Accordingly he instructed the Elector of Mayence to negotiate with the Protestant princes for the termination of all

differences ; and among them not the least was this, that they persisted in refusing to recognise Ferdinand as King of the Romans.

Finally, two treaties were concluded,—one between Ferdinand and the Elector, the other between the same and Ulrich of Wurtemberg. By the former it was stipulated that the articles of Ratisbon should be faithfully observed ; that no sort of legal procedure should be instituted on religious grounds against the Protestants (the Anabaptists and Sacramentaries being expressly excluded from this benefit) ; that the princes of Smalcald should recognise Ferdinand as King of the Romans ; but that the election to that dignity should thenceforward be conducted according to the forms prescribed by the Golden Bull. The latter conveyed the Duchy of Wurtemberg to Ulrich and his male successors as a fief of the Archduchy of Austria, on condition that the duke should make no alliance against the House of Austria, and exercise perfect toleration towards his Roman Catholic subjects. These treaties were signed on June 29, 1534, and they placed the Reformation in a safer political position than any that it had previously attained.

Yet the international relations of the chief powers were at that moment so perversely complicated, as to give little promise of stability to any result arising out of them. Clement, through the seeming inclination of his temporal policy, through the nice calculation of his family interests, and most of all, perhaps, through his terror of the council suspended over him by the imperial hand, had forsaken the alliance of Charles, and united himself closely with France. France, again, maintained a good understanding with the confederacy of Smalcald, and was in actual alliance with the Landgrave of Hesse. There is reason to believe that, but for the seasonable concessions of the Emperor, the victorious arms of Philip

would have been conducted across the Alps against the Spanish conquerors of Lombardy: thus the Pope was in friendly and almost immediate connexion with the Protestant princes. It is even asserted that he encouraged their resistance to Charles, and delighted in the aspect of their independence. His policy was guided by his fears: the Emperor was the bugbear of the moment; and any result which tended to curtail his power was thought a triumph. Yet the position of the Protestants at this crisis was the true one, rather than his. Their's was a single object, to secure their emancipation from Rome; and this could be thwarted by no earthly means, except the direct hostility of the Emperor. Therefore it was a welcome matter to them to see that hostility provoked by their only real foe, and turned away from themselves against the power which alone they detested. While Clement, whose object was not single, but who was distracted by many and quite inconsistent purposes, while he thought to make the Landgrave's arms the momentary instrument of his own secular views, did, in fact, contribute to the permanent and substantial power of the spiritual rebels.

Still, though his connexion with Francis would have justified the open aggression of Charles, he remonstrated in his usual tone of indignant dissatisfaction against the above treaties. It was to him an unpardonable offence that so rich and populous a province, so favourably situated for the propagation of the opinions which it was now sure to adopt, should be thus delivered over to the Protestant confederacy. It was in vain that Ferdinand attempted to vindicate the act by necessity, and to show that still greater losses would have been occasioned by an opposite policy; the Pope affected to consider nothing but the impending apostacy of Wurtemberg; and no doubt he was sincere in his wish both to prevent that, and

to involve the Emperor in a continued conflict with the Landgrave. This intensity of his selfishness was better known to none, than to the sovereigns who generally supported his despotism; and thus, if there existed some dangerous jealousies in the camp of the reformers, if some unessential differences were aggravated by the zeal of religious enthusiasm, the vigour of the enemy was broken by mutual distrust, and its operations paralysed by perpetual broils and bickerings. The policy of the Protestants was simple and uniform, and there was little to divert it from its straight course. The spiritual policy of Rome was equally direct; but it was disturbed by the continual interference of the temporal interests of the see, or the personal schemes of the Pope of the day, which warped its action and weakened the efficacy of its best devised measures, and defeated its craftiest calculations.

Three months after the conclusion of the treaties of Prague, on September 27, 1534, Pope Clement died. "He died," according to the expressions of Guicciardini,* "detested by his court, suspected by the princes, with an offensive and hateful reputation—for he was esteemed avaricious, faithless, and by nature indisposed to do good to mankind." In addition to the evil qualities here specified, others mention an obduracy and inclemency, which grew with the decay of his frame, and the morbid weakness of declining life. The virtues commonly ascribed to him are gravity, parsimony, self-control, circumspection, or, in Fra Paolo's expression, dissimulation

* "Muorè odioso alla corte, sospetto ai principi, e con fama più presto grave ed odioso che piacevole, essendo riputato avaro, di poca fede, ed alieno di natura da beneficiare gli nomini. . . . E nondimeno nelle sue azioni molto grave, molto circospetto, e molto vincitore di se medesimo, e di grandissima capacità, se la timidità non gli aveva spesso corrotto il giudizio." Lib. xx. See also Fra Paolo, Lib. i.

—for, indeed, the last was so essential a quality at the court of Rome, that he who excelled in that, in which all aspired to excel, deserved the sort of praise attached to such pre-eminence. “His capacity,” continues Guicciardini, “would have been on the largest scale, had not his timidity frequently perverted his judgment. Yet his capacity was suited to detail rather than superintendence: he had been an accomplished minister, but he was not a great prince. His very sagacity in the penetration of hostile designs, the very foresight with which he anticipated all imaginable obstacles, even the slightest, unnerved his government, and prevented the vigorous pursuance of any steady policy. And though the difficulties of his position were indeed such as to make it questionable whether any combination of wisdom and consistency could have carried him successfully through them, his was certainly not the character best qualified to contend with them.”

Accordingly we see that the history of his pontificate is a journal of disasters. On his accession to the see he found the reformers, not indeed despicable, but neither quite certain of their own views, nor fully acquainted with their strength. They were contending, indeed, with courage and honour in the diets of the empire; but they were united by no visible bond; they were assembled round no common standard; they had issued no general manifesto; they had assumed no general designation—in a word, they were not yet disciplined or organised, and it might have seemed no difficult matter to break and disperse them.

But step by step they acquired all these means of co-operation and elements of stability. The Catholic league, cemented by Campeggio, though in most respects a wise expedient, yet taught the necessity of union to the reformers, and suggested a precedent and a model for

their confederacy. Again, the protest of Spires compromised them to express principles, and gave them a name, and attached certain distinct ideas to their name. Next, the confession of Augsburg rallied them round a body of intelligible doctrine; and those who had once asserted and contended for it, in the face of all Christendom, would not easily be induced to forsake it. All these transactions confirmed them, besides, in the habit of acting together for a common interest, and against a common foe. And at last, fortified by the continual accession of new adherents, and aided, through God's providence, by the broils of international politics, they entered on a bolder course, and negotiated as equals, and successfully, with the Emperor himself. And this, their virtual independence of Rome, was confirmed by treaties, which were indeed only provisional, but which it would still be very difficult, under any probable circumstances, to cancel. So that Clement, as the result of all his struggles and stratagems, left the insurgents in a far stronger position than that in which he found them. He found them a mere sect, unacknowledged, undisciplined, unpractised in negotiation, or co-operation; he left them a strong compact religious community, fortified by a political confederacy.

CHAPTER XLI.

TRANSACTIONS IN ITALY AND GERMANY TILL JUNE,
1539.

Paul III. elected Pope—his professed zeal for a council of reformation—his appointment of cardinals—he sends Vergerio as nuncio into Germany—conference between Vergerio and Luther at Wittemberg—accounts of this event—remarks on them—the Protestant princes object to a council at Mantua—Henry VIII. makes overtures to the League of Smalcald—on what condition they are accepted—subsequent proceedings—Charles returns from Africa to Italy—his entry into Rome—his unreserved communications with the Pope—which end in a Bull convoking a council at Mantua—the Protestants assembled at Smalcald deliberately reject the council—presence and influence of Luther at this meeting—articles signed on this occasion—the reservation of Melancthon, and suspicions occasioned by it—other measures adopted by the League—conduct of Francis—the Duke of Mantua refuses his city—and the council is prorogued to Vicenza—committee of reform appointed at Rome—its report—discussed in full consistory—further consideration of it deferred—twenty-eight articles proposed in it—they become known in Germany, and give a triumph to the Protestants—Paul mediates at Nice with some effect between Charles and Francis—the council of Vicenza is then adjourned—and then further postponed *sine die*—remarks on this matter—and on the general difficulties of the position of the Pope.

It is related that Clement, who had for some months presaged his approaching dissolution, declared in the presence of many of the cardinals, that, if the Popedom could be bequeathed by him, he should appoint Cardinal Farnese for his successor. This cardinal was a Roman, of informed and cultivated talents, of benevolent feelings, “of an easy, magnificent, and liberal nature,” of consummate discretion, and of long experience in the affairs

of the see, having attained the age of sixty-six years, and enjoyed the purple for forty-one. On the 11th of October, immediately after the obsequies of Clement, the cardinals entered into conclave, and on the morning of the 13th they announced the election of Farnese. Many causes concurred to accelerate their determination. Much scandal had been occasioned by the inordinate duration, sixty-four days, of the preceding conclave. It was desirable to anticipate the probable interference of the Emperor. The personal character of the party could not fail, in that crisis of the church, to have weight with the wisest. To the ambitious his advanced age offered the prospect of a speedy vacancy. Even the recommendation of Clement may have exerted its influence: at least it would appear that the choice was already fixed by a common understanding among the prelates, before they proceeded to the form of election.

It had long been usual for every cardinal, while in conclave, to declare on oath that, should the appointment fall on him, he would, among other obligations, immediately convoke a council—a promise which had been invariably violated. On this occasion the formality was dispensed with; and Paul III. ascended the spiritual throne free from any such engagement. Yet it so proved that he instantly undertook, and with the appearance of a voluntary zeal, the task so carefully evaded by his perjured predecessors. Even before his coronation, only three days after his election, he summoned a general congregation of the Sacred College, and expounded his views on that subject with great earnestness: that the remedy could be deferred no longer: that the concord of Christendom and the extinction of the heresies depended on its immediate application: and then, as some pledge of his sincerity, he commissioned three cardinals to deliberate on the time and place and other necessary

circumstances, and to make their report at his first consistory.

At the same time he broached another subject, which, with whatever eye the council might be regarded, could not fail to give displeasure to his hearers. He represented to them, that one of the principal subjects of the council's deliberations would be the corruption of the church; and then, since it would ill become the dignity of their body to receive reformation from the hands of others, he suggested that they would do well to anticipate any such interference by correcting themselves; since the decrees, which might be directed against the inferior clergy, would fall with little effect, unless a commanding example were set by the self-amendment of the highest.

The consistory assembled on the 13th of November, but with no important result. It was agreed, that the political peace of Christendom was essential to the efficacy of a council; and that Paul should despatch his nuncios to the various courts to mediate for that purpose. Meanwhile, those who watched him most closely began already to question his sincerity. Through the same diplomatic experience which had refined his understanding, he had acquired, like his predecessor, the habit of profound dissimulation. It was that among his qualities which he valued most.* His eagerness for the council was thought by some to be altogether feigned, and his zeal for self-reformation to proceed from a secret desire of inspiring the sacred body with a detestation of the threatened council, and thus making them his instruments to elude or prevent it. There were others who believed him honest; and the reputation of the men whom he first promoted to the purple—Gaspar Contarini, Sadoletus, Caraffa, Giberto, Pole—

* Fra Paolo. Lib. i. cap. 50.

threw for the moment an honourable lustre upon his own. But this was tarnished by an act of nepotism more ordinary in the annals of the Vatican. He elevated his nephew and his son, two boys, the one of fourteen, the other of sixteen years, to the same dignity. This was not the disinterested purity which was the only shelter then remaining to the papal power against the storm that menaced it. This was not to exhibit to the distant friends of Rome the elevated model which, at that crisis, they had a right to expect from her. This was not to furnish, even to the members of his own court, an example of that virtuous self-denial which he so loudly recommended to them.

He appointed Vergerio to the office of nuncio in Germany, after personally consulting with him on the state of that country. His instructions were to make general professions of desire for the council; to prevent the assembling of any national synod or conference; and by personal negotiation and the use of all amicable expedients, to win over, one by one, the chiefs of the party, and thus dissolve the League. Vergerio fixed himself in the first instance, and in the absence of the Emperor, at the court of Ferdinand, and there tampered with such of the Protestant princes as occasion presented to him. Presently, learning that Joachim of Brandenburg was dead, and had left two Protestant sons, he decided to travel to Berlin, where they resided, and to treat with them. To that end he was obliged to traverse Saxony; and so, being provided with guards to protect him from personal affront, he decided to visit Wittemberg. This was in the November of 1535.

On this occasion a conference took place between the nuncio and Luther. The circumstances are, of course, variously related. According to Fra Paolo, it was the nuncio who made all the advances towards reconcilia-

tion. He represented the high estimation in which Luther was held at Rome, the strong desire entertained there to restore him to communion.—He flattered, he caressed the heretic; and, in return, was overwhelmed by an effusion of indignation and scorn.—It mattered little to Luther in what light he was regarded at the Vatican. The service of the Pontiff resembled that of Christ, as darkness resembled light. The severity of Leo X. and the bitterness of Gaetan (to which the nuncio had alluded with expressions of regret), were to him most fortunate circumstances, since they had compelled him to persist in his search after truth. The Church of Rome stood, like a secular establishment, upon mere human reasons. Whether the proposed council shall turn to good or evil, will depend, not on Luther, but on the Pope. If it be free, if the Holy Spirit alone preside over it, if the sole arbiter of controversy be Holy Writ, then will Luther attend it with Christian sincerity and charity, not for the interest of the Pope, but for the glory of Christ and the peace and liberty of His church. And, lastly, it will be easier for the Pope and his nuncio, and all his hierarchy, to embrace the faith of Luther, than for Luther to return to theirs. . . . These and other independent expressions are ascribed to Luther by the Venetian historian; but, though perfectly consistent with probability, they do not rest, so far as I am informed, on sufficient authority.

Pallavicino contradicts some part of this account, and substitutes another, standing on strong, but not unsuspecting evidence—the official letters of Vergerio himself. According to this statement, the nuncio reluctantly received the visit of the heretic, and listened with pain to his many sophistries, absurdities, and puerilities, utterly removed from reason. In respect to the council,

Luther expressed his distrust in it, because it was the pleasure of Satan, for the punishment of human pride, to infuse the most irrational errors into the wisest of the sons of this world. . . . but, at the same time, his resolution to assist at it, and to defend his opinions, even at the risk of his life, against the whole universe—it was not his own wrath, but the zeal of God, which forced him to speak thus warmly. . . . Vergerio remarked, besides, that the Latin which Luther spoke was so extremely barbarous, as to make it a question whether he were indeed the author of those eloquent and even classical compositions which bore his name.

A third account is that of the Wittenbergers,* less elaborate indeed than those of the Italian writers, but bearing stronger marks of truth. According to that, Vergerio arrived at Wittenberg, on Saturday, November 6th. Early on the following morning Luther sent for his barber, and informed him, “That he was summoned by the nuncio of the most holy father, and that he wished to make his best appearance before him, to the end” (as he jocosely added) “that I may be taken for a younger man than I am, and so terrify my enemies with the threat of a long life.” Having put on his best attire, and even placed a golden ornament on his neck, he entered a carriage, together with Pomeranus, exclaiming with a smile, “Here are Pope Germanus and Cardinal Pomeranus! It is the work of God.”†

In conversing with Vergerio concerning the council, he said that the Pope was not serious in his promise; that he was deluding them; that, if it were to meet,

* *Lutheri Opera*, tom. vi. Alt. fol. 492, apud Seck. lib. vii. sect. vi. §. 34. It is the work of one person, who admits that all the circumstances of the interview had not come to his knowledge.

† “*En Papa Germanus et Cardinalis Pomeranus! Opus hoc Dei est!*”

nothing important would be treated in it, but only matters of no account, such as tonsures and stoles—nothing about faith and justification, about the union of Christians in the bond of the Spirit and of faith; for such was not *their* (the papal) interest; that he and his friends had no need of a council for their edification, but only those wretched souls who, under the oppression of the Roman tyranny, knew not what their faith really was. However, call your council, and I will attend it, with God's will, though it so fall out that I be burnt there."—"Where will you consent that the council be held?"—"Wherever you wish—at Mantua, Padua, Florence—anywhere."—"At Bologna?"—"Whose is Bologna?"—"The Pope's."—"Well, good God! and has the Pope seized that city too? I will go even thither."—"But the Pope may possibly come to Wittenberg——." "Let him come; we shall be delighted to receive him." "But shall he come with an army, or in peace?" "As he likes—we shall be prepared for both."

The legate afterwards inquired whether priests were consecrated in Saxony? "Certainly," replied Luther, "they are consecrated, since the Pope will not consecrate or ordain for us. See, here sits our bishop" (pointing to Pomeranus) "whom we have consecrated." And after other discussions, conducted on Luther's part with perfect openness and fearlessness and great severity, the nuncio, while mounting his horse, exclaimed, "See, then, that you hold yourself in readiness for the council."—"I will come, my lord, and bring this neck of mine along with me."*

From the comparison of these three accounts it is manifest that there is some truth in all. And without

* "Videut sis instructus ad concilium." "Veniam, Domine, cum isto collo meo."

entering into any consideration of particulars, wholly unimportant, we may confidently conclude, from each and from all of them, that the reformer maintained his bold and manly character in this conference, that he expressed no fear of the council, nor any reluctance to attend it, and that he taught the Roman courtier what a rude experiment it was to parley with Luther.

Vergerio found the princes not more obsequious than the divines. He proposed to them to accept Mantua as the place of the council, and he recommended it by several plausible considerations, among which it was one, that Germany was so infested by Anabaptists, Sacramentaries, and other sectarians, as to afford no space for calm and impartial deliberation. The Catholic princes expressed their assent. The Protestants deferred their reply till their next meeting at Smalcald, at the end of 1535, in order both to gain time and to secure a more general co-operation of the party. In effect, on the 21st of December they issued an elaborate manifesto, signed by fifteen princes and the deputies of thirty cities, expressing their objections, and the principles on which they were founded.

There was little in this document which had not been already advanced in some other form. They claimed the imperial promise that the council should be held in Germany. And, admitting the necessity of such an assembly for the good of the Commonwealth and the safety of all, for the repression of the persecutors of the Gospel, and the restoration of order in the Churches, they described the sort of assembly which they demanded—that it should be free and legitimate, composed of talented and learned men, chosen and approved by the Emperor and the other princes, and having for the sole guide of their decisions, the Word of God. Councils, they declared, were not the tribunals of the

Pope, nor of priests alone, but of all the orders of the church, the laity included ; and it was a tyrannous injustice to prefer the power of the chief to the authority of the whole church, of which the executive was rightfully vested in the temporal sovereigns. In the present case many important questions were in dispute, on which the Pope had pronounced with an arbitrary severity. It remained for the princes to determine by impartial rules the manner of the future proceedings, to apply the sincerity of justice to the disorders of the church, and to legislate according to the dictates of reason and the example of the primitive communion. To a council thus constituted they promised entire obedience and zealous co-operation for the restoration of concord.

The assembly at Smalcald was on this occasion attended by the ambassadors of France and England. Francis and Henry were alike desirous to turn against their rival the divisions in his empire, and to employ the spiritual malcontents as implements of their own ambition or revenge. Francis had appeared first in that field ; but Henry was at that instant the more ardent suitor. He exhorted the Protestants to persist in their opposition to a council, which would serve no other end than to confirm the papal authority ; and he condescended to offer himself as a member of the League. Had the confederates been very weak or very timid ; had they regarded the seeming advantage of the moment, rather than the more permanent interests of a more considerate and long-sighted policy, they would have yielded to that temptation. But they reflected, that the fidelity of that most unscrupulous prince would depend entirely upon the continuance of the motives which led him to seek their alliance. They perceived, of course, that he who persecuted their brethren in England could have

no attachment to their creed ; and they were determined that their league should be an association strictly religious, united not merely by the same temporal interests, but also by the same doctrinal opinions. Thus the very same principle which impelled them to reject the Sacramentaries, encouraged them to prescribe conditions even to the king of England. It was already a great triumph for them, that he had sought their league ; it was a still greater, that they did not rashly seize the overture.

Among the stipulations which they proposed to him were the following : That he should embrace the Confession of Augsburg ; that he should defend their cause in a free council ; that he should accept no council without their consent, and protest, in common with them, against a purely papal assembly ; that he should take the title of Protector of the League, and furnish one hundred thousand crowns for its necessities. When these preliminaries should be settled, they engaged to send ambassadors for the conclusion of the treaty.

Henry perceived from this reply how independent was the spirit of the Protestant confederacy. He perceived, likewise, that it rested on a purely religious foundation, not, as he probably suspected, on political dissatisfaction, pretending religion. On doctrinal points he doubtless entertained the same opinions as when he descended into the lists against Luther ; and the recollection of that controversy was not calculated to soften him into any professions of insincere concurrence. Yet he was desirous, through enmity both to the Emperor and the Pope, to continue even so hollow a negotiation. And thus, while he returned on other points an ambiguous reply, he requested the confederates to send an embassy to his court, and to empower it to explain or modify certain of the articles of the Confession, to which